

AEROPLANE PHOTOGRAPHS FROM THE FIGHTING FRONTS. By Ward Muir.
THAT LUMP OF CLAY CALLED ESSEX. [Illustrated.]

COUNTRY LIFE

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COUNTRY LIFE

VOL. XLI.—No. 1063.

SATURDAY, MAY 19th, 1917.

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From a Painting by

MRS. CHARLES HUNTER.

John Sargent, R.A.

COUNTRY LIFE

THE JOURNAL FOR ALL INTERESTED IN
COUNTRY LIFE & COUNTRY PURSUITS

OFFICES: 20, TAVISTOCK STREET, COVENT GARDEN, W.C.

CONTENTS

	PAGE
Our Frontispiece: Mrs. Charles Hunter	485, 486
Fruit Prospects. (Leader)	486
Country Notes	487
Hide, Hide Your Tears, by F. W. Bourdillon	487
The Legend of the Cuckoo, by Maria Steuart	488
That Lump of Clay Called Essex	489
The Hecatomb of the Trees, by A. S. Falconer	490
Aeroplane Photographs from the Fighting Fronts, by Ward Muir. (Illustrated)	490
The Academy Exhibition, by G. Jean-Aubry	495
Country Home: Hill Hall, Essex.—III, by H. Avray Tipping. (Illustrated)	496
Wildfowl at Salonika	502
Literature	503
Interiora Rerum, or the Inside of Things ("Quivis"); God the Invisible King (H. G. Wells); The Cameroons (Albert F. Calvert); The Silver Lining (O. C. Platoon); Wayside Crosses; The Book of the Sea- Trout, with some Chapters on Salmon (Hamish Stuart); This is the End (Stella Benson).	
Bot'ling Fruit Pulp without Sugar or Water	504
The Gaekwars of Baroda in Medallic Art. (Illustrated)	505
Correspondence	506
Agriculture and Commerce (J. L. Green); Banning the Percheron; Curious Action by Irish Authorities (G. G. Carter); Oliver Cromwell and Chequers Court (Hubert D. Aspley); Leather-jackets in the Lettuce-bed (H. L. Brooksbank); Friendly Cock Robins (S. Lloyd); A Rapid Recovery (Gertrude A. Fryer); Home-made Jams, etc.; Ducklings (S. A. Brown); A "Tramp's" Lodging-house of Bygone Days (Alice Kemp-Welch); Primitive Threshing (H. S. Vaughan); The Proposed Dog Tax (W. Sugden); The Food of Parrots (E. K. Benson); "Sublime Tobacco!" (Alice Hughes); Badgers; Comrades (Barbara A. McMaster).	
A Lesser Country House of the Early XVIIIth Century: Bridgefoot, Iver, Bucks, by Lawrence Weaver. (Illustrated)	2*
Racing and Breeding Notes	6*
War-time Cooking, by Frances Keyser	8*
Books Received	8*
The Automobile World. (Illustrated)	10*
British Enterprise and Industry	14*
Modes and Moods. (Illustrated)	16*
From the Editor's Bookshelf	18*
For Town and Country	18*

EDITORIAL NOTICE

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. We appeal to our readers to send their copies of recent issues of COUNTRY LIFE to the TROOPS AT THE FRONT. This can be done by simply handing them over the counter of any Post Office. No label, wrapper or address is needed and no postage need be paid.

The War Office notifies that all papers posted to any neutral European country will be stopped, except those sent by publishers and newsagents who have obtained special permission from the War Office. Such permission has been granted to COUNTRY LIFE, and subscribers who send to friends in Denmark, Holland, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, Spain, Portugal, Greece, Rumania, neutral Countries in America, and the Dependencies of neutral European Countries in Africa should order copies to be despatched by the Publisher from 20, Tavistock Street, Covent Garden, W.C.2.

FRUIT PROSPECTS

RATHER too much has been made of a something like hesitancy in the food policy of Lord Devonport. Those who follow the course of events closely are more likely to be pleased than disturbed at the ability shown by the Food Controller to modify and, when necessary, alter his original ideas. The food situation itself changes from day to day, and those called upon to deal with it ventured into a strange land where there were no guide-posts. And the situation does not lend itself to very heroic treatment. As far as we can make out, there is food enough in the country to go round, if consumption is maintained on a moderate basis; but there is not enough if any considerable part of the population is going to disregard the appeals made to their patriotism and eat according to the

manners that existed before the war. It is very difficult to bring the necessity for self-sacrifice home to the mind that is at some distance from the centre of the country. We are told that the agricultural classes in some parts of the Midlands are eating and drinking as freely as they did in the days of peace. They acknowledge no scarcity either of bread, potatoes or meat, but they eat their fill of all of them and justify their action on the ground that no one can find fault with them since they are only eating what they grow. To get some idea of patriotism into the heads of people like this would be worth a considerable amount of trouble. It is hopeless to expect that on a volunteer system of rationing such people will cease to exist. There are some whose indifference to patriotic motives no exhortation can stir and no appeal move. But by dint of bringing over to the side of moderation all who are inclined that way the number of the indifferent may be reduced sufficiently to render it unnecessary to start a system of food tickets or compulsory rationing under any form whatever.

There is another consideration of great importance which is quietly modifying the state of affairs. After May sets in the supplies of food from the garden begin to grow and develop. At present these supplies may only amount to a few salad plants, but even these are not to be despised at a time when such necessities as butter have risen more than a hundred per cent. in cost. Country children, at any rate, prefer a little greenstuff to butter or margarine. These salad plants may be expected to increase in number very steadily as time goes on. The delicate grass of the little salad onions is beginning to appear above the ground, spinach is coming on fast, carrots are approaching the age at which they can be utilised for soup, and various other things, small in themselves but considerable in the bulk, are growing in nooks and corners of the garden. As it happens, fruit prospects have not been so good for many years, although it is always risky in this case to count your chickens before they are hatched. Still, the chances are decidedly in favour of full orchards this year, as the trees have only come now into full blossom. It is said of the apple, the latest of the garden fruit trees, that if it passes May 8th without suffering from the frost, it is safe for the year. Well, on May 8th the apple was not in blossom in the open garden, nor was the plum, cherry or pear. They are only coming now to the fulness of their beauty, and it is extremely unlikely that the frosts will do them any very great damage. The period when it is most effective is just after the flower has come fully out. As soon as the blossom is over the danger from frost goes down to a minimum, but the orchardist knows by sad experience that he has more enemies to contend with than the cold. If the season be exceptionally hot and dry, the fruit demands a great deal of attention, and if this be not paid, it sooner or later begins to dry and fall, so that the owner becomes a dismal witness of what promised to be a record crop dwindling to nothing. Cherries are especially liable to suffer in this manner; but neither apples, plums nor pears are exempt. Then, a very fine summer often has the effect of calling into existence an exceptionally large number of insect pests, so that in fruit cultivation a man has very little time in which to play the sluggard. He must spray the trees to get rid of the pests, just as he must water them to get rid of the drought. Excellent crops are only obtained by sedulous attention.

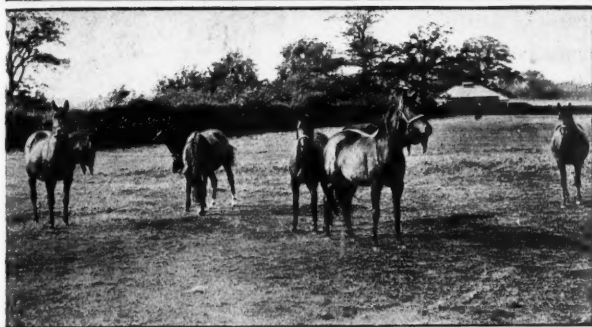
Of the other garden crops it is yet far too early to speak. Many thought that their little seeds, such as carrots, onions, cabbage, lettuce and so on, had rotted in the ground during the severe frost, but, as a matter of fact, they began to appear quite freshly and healthily after the severe shower that accompanied the thunderstorm on Saturday night. It is not as though the sowing had been done when the land was suffering from lack of moisture. Even yet there is only a cake of dry soil on the top; there is plenty of wet earth below, and it would be strange indeed if, under the conditions, there were not at least a reasonable return of vegetables for the autumn.

Our Frontispiece

OUR frontispiece this week is a reproduction of the portrait painted by Mr. John Sargent, R.A., of Mrs. Charles Hunter of Hill Hall, Epping.

. It is particularly requested that no permissions to photograph houses, gardens or livestock on behalf of COUNTRY LIFE be granted except when direct application is made from the offices of the paper. When such requests are received, the Editor would esteem the kindness of readers if they would forward the correspondence at once to him.

COUNTRY



NOTES

THE question of providing ploughs to prepare the ground for the harvest of 1918, raised in regard to Essex in an article published this week, is applicable far beyond the bounds of that county. Ministers have pledged themselves to see that three million additional acres will be brought under the plough for next year's harvest. In most cases the work will have to be started in early summer. If it could be done in the present weather, almost all the weeds would be killed in one ploughing, because the drought of three weeks has drawn the moisture from the soil and the sunshine shrivels up in an hour whatever is presented to it. But it will not be as simple as it looks to provide the farmers with ploughs that they will consent to employ. It is perfectly true that where the tractor has been widely used it is becoming firmly established as a farm implement, but it would be a great mistake to assume that because a few intelligent and advanced men are making a change the great mass of farmers are convinced. They are nothing of the kind. Every Agricultural Committee, even, is not favourable to mechanical ploughing, and the preference for the expensive and clumsy steam tackle is very widespread. Knowledge has always to be bought by experience, and it is very probable that a great deal of the ploughing will be started on bad and uneconomical lines. It will take several seasons to make the majority recognise that as far as invention has gone up to now the tractor plough is the best for all-round work on the farm. The steam plough does not plough nearly so well, and it is very expensive. Surely any farmer must recognise that it is easier to earn interest on a capital outlay of £200 than upon a capital outlay of £3,000.

IT would be very unlike the greatest sporting nation in the world not to give the Germans credit for the splendid stand they made at Bullecourt. The story reads like an incident in the history of some of our own regiments. Hindenburg must have been intensely anxious that the village should not fall into our hands. The German headquarters have constantly reported that all attempts to take it were, and were doomed to be, fruitless. But on Saturday last British troops, not to be denied, attacked the village by a double flanking movement, on the south-east advancing from a part of the Hindenburg Line which we had occupied since May 3rd, and on the north-west attacking from the bastion adjoining the Hindenburg Line as it leads towards Fontaine les Croisilles. The defenders of Bullecourt were caught. They did not seek to escape, but having received orders to fight to the death, did so with desperate valour. Not a man yielded, and the struggle was not ended till all of them were dead. As the sincerity of our tribute to the desperate courage of the defenders, so is our appreciation of the vast importance that Hindenburg had attached to this point in his line. He threw into it reserves, regardless of expense in blood; he charged his men to fight to their last gasp in its defence, and they fell victims to his savage determination to save his line at this point. Against the steady, unrelenting, unhastening attack of Sir Douglas Haig, such tactics of those of Hindenburg are in vain. And it will never be forgotten that it was the valour of our Australian troops that made the capture of the place possible.

SIR WILLIAM ROBERTSON excites the imagination in the same way as an astronomer does. Poets write beautifully of the starry hosts' infinity and similar topics equally dear to them; but the astronomer weighs and measures, reckons and describes, and the facts he amasses bring out a picture beyond the power of mere words to express. So Sir William Robertson, without making any direct appeal to the imagination, nevertheless presents facts that make us realise that we are in the midst of the greatest war the world has ever known. Twenty-four million people fighting, two hundred thousand tons of explosives expended in the last few weeks at Arras, and the fact that the shells were made in England, carried over to France, man-handled six or eight times, and that there have been carried millions of men, hundreds of thousands of horses, millions of tons of war material and food, and we gradually begin to realise the enormousness and the importance of this war. Future generations will probably look back to it as long as time lasts. We cannot believe that humanity will be so blind and perverse as to allow the struggle to be repeated as long as historians keep alive the memory of its cruelties and consequences. Thus Sir William Robertson, adding significant fact to significant fact, creates a picture of his own of the fighting.

IT is a great pity that so far the Russian Revolution has not found its Cromwell. The state urgently needs a head of one kind or another; one to whom the peasants can look as the centre whence law and directions flow. As far as an outsider is able to judge, the man best qualified to assume the rôle is General Brussiloff. His energy and determination have been conspicuous in the military operations of the war. His patriotism and good faith are stainless and unimpeachable. He has a soldier's way of speaking his mind to his countrymen without the fawning and flattery used by political rhetoricians. Above all, he is gifted with the characteristics of force and decision. Just recently he took occasion to point out that the war cannot be effectually carried on without a stern and perfect discipline. No army in history has ever been able to achieve anything without having a great commander who had the faculty for getting himself obeyed. Cromwell was the implacable foe of absolute government in his day, but he turned himself into a soldier as well, and his Ironsides were drilled as thoroughly as they could have been.

HIDE, HIDE YOUR TEARS.

Hide, hide your tears,
Ye breaking hearts, lest sorrow
Darken their years
Whose is the bright To-morrow!

What can repay
The ruin of fair roses,
Though weeping day
In golden sunset closes?

Or what amend
Can be for child-hearts breaking,
Though the world lend
Gold, glory and mirth-making?

Though your dark night
Show moon nor star adorning,
Grudge not delight
To the young heirs of Morning!

F. W. BOURDILLON.

THE Board of Agriculture, after doing a great deal to encourage poultry keeping, has begun to steer very decidedly in the opposite course. In a leaflet just issued it is pointed out that the average pullet in the first eighteen months of her life consumes about 100lb. of corn and meal or their equivalent, lays about 180 eggs and, if killed, weighs about 4½lb. The dry edible food in her carcase and the eggs she has laid amount to 6½lb., so that she has consumed about 15lb. of corn and meal or their equivalent for every pound of dry edible food she has produced. It is a very good argument, but it would have been still better if the two quantities had been reduced to the same denomination. The reader will naturally ask what is the equivalent weight of dry food to 15lb. of cereals. Dry grain does not contain so much moisture as chicken meat or eggs, but still there is a percentage to be deducted. When this food test is applied to other stock the pig comes out best, and, therefore, as soon as the present laying season is over the poultry keeper should sell his hens and buy pigs.

AGRICULTURAL education goes on apace under the stimulus of war. In some respects the small potato grower in this country has lagged behind the similar kind of man in Ireland. We refer to the matter of spraying potatoes. It is the commonest sight in the world to see Irish smallholders, each with his sprayer on his back, well strapped round his shoulders, going about spraying the haulms of his tubers. But in this country only the big growers have been in the habit of doing this. The little grower is inclined to think that the expense and trouble do not give him an adequate return. As a matter of fact, the value and quantity of the crop are very much improved by spraying. We are glad, therefore, that the Horticultural Section of the Food Production Department is taking practical steps for the encouragement of this process. They have been testing Knapsack Sprayers, and their experts agree in recommending the "Four Oaks," "Stonehouse," and "Mysto" patterns. They are doing more than recommend them, however; they have actually ordered and obtained a stock, so that any cultivator in the country can order his spraying machine from the Food Production Department and obtain it for a cost, including carriage, of £3. Materials for spraying are to be supplied at cost price, in the same way. Copper sulphate and soda put up in small bags and packed in wooden cases holding sufficient to spray one and one-third acres would cost 24s. a case. But those who are not growing by the acre, only by a garden plot, will be able to purchase small bags by joining with their neighbours to order a case and divide it among them. After the war it is pretty certain that the habit of spraying will be continued.

ORCHARDS and gardens with fruit trees in them are now presenting a pretty and unusual sight. This year the plum, like the almond, instead of bursting into flower before leaf, is producing leaf and flower together, so that the white shows among greenery. The pears have come out in full bloom, and a finer show of blossom could scarcely be imagined. But the apples, too, at any rate the earlier varieties, are coming rapidly into flower, so that the usual succession has been done away with, and the principal kinds of fruit tree—plum, cherry, apple, pear—are practically all blooming at one and the same time. Bush fruit, too, promises to be an immense crop. Black currants and red currants, gooseberries and raspberries, are all showing a most unusually abundant quantity of blossom, and as the time for severe frosts has now passed, there is every reason to hope for a bumper season of fruit.

NO doubt the politicians imagine they have good reason for bringing in a measure of electoral reform at the present moment, but it seems a very absurd thing to those who regard it with detached common-sense. Apart from the direct call of the war upon the best intellects in public life, there are a thousand other problems which have been directly raised by it, and they demand the most careful consideration. New situations are arising daily; new difficulties presenting themselves. The only plausible excuse for bringing in a Franchise Bill at the present moment is that it may have a chance of getting through without attracting too much attention. In other words, a subject that ought to be thrashed out thoroughly is brought up in a manner that may enable it to evade discussion. Electoral reform cannot possibly be a pressing subject till this struggle is over, and those fervent orators who are continually exhorting everybody else to concentrate on winning the war, would show wisdom if they began by acting on their own excellent precepts. Hurried legislation in the middle of a war is to be deprecated from every possible point of view.

RACING, it appears, is being reconsidered by the Government. Indeed, this was inevitable after the confession of ministers that the number of horses in training had been exaggerated and also the use of oats for feeding purposes. There is very little sympathy in the country with racing as a sport to be carried on under war conditions, and to cite the example of other countries does not at all convince the objectors. On the other hand, the facts that remain are, first, that English thoroughbreds are the best in the world and form a valuable national asset; second, the need of horses for the Army is unending—it is accentuated in war, but exists also in times of peace—and the most satisfactory way of supplying this want is from our own resources; third, every branch of British commerce must be nourished in the coming years, and horses stand first in the list of pedigree stock that we sell abroad. It may be that shorthorn cattle form a bigger trade in the lump, but no shorthorn brings

the price of a great racehorse. These are reasons for maintaining racing as long as it does not lead to waste on the part of rich and irresponsible spectators or to the taking away of valuable labour from other sources. In fact, although called racing, it would not be really entitled to that name, but rather take on the nature of tests for the purpose of discovering the value and stamina of horses.

ALL sorts and conditions of men are being instructed in the patriotic art of giving up personal pleasures for the good of the state. The hunting man has had to surrender his horse, the racing man his thoroughbred, but, most pathetic of all, the humble citizen who loves dogs is made to part with his favourites. It is true that the state does not command him to destroy them, but Mr. Bonar Law has fashioned a decree that no doubt will take its place on the Statute Book shortly. By increasing the cost of a licence for one dog and imposing what are to many people prohibitive taxes on those who keep more than one, he has taken a certain way of diminishing the canine population. With characteristic patriotism the vast majority of Englishmen have submitted to this loss without a murmur, but a few are doing their utmost by petition and otherwise to obtain less drastic terms for the dog.

THE LEGEND OF THE CUCKOO.

"Cuckoo, cuckoo, when shall I be wed?"

The maidens cry.

"Cuckoo, cuckoo, when shall I be dead?"

The old folks sigh.

And I must answer over and o'er

"Cuckoo, cuckoo," for the years that pass

Before these things must happen. Alas!

For some folk live to be ninety-four

And some are old when they marry.

So I never have time I am so pressed

Like other birds to build me a nest,

Of downy feathers bound with grass,

Or twigs, moss-lined, where my eggs might rest

And the spring-time will not tarry.

So I have to choose one ready-made,

By some small bird, where my egg is laid.

Cuckoo!

'Tis hard, but what can I do?

Ah me! Cuckoo, cuckoo!

MARIA STEUART.

EVERYBODY will welcome the little discussion on economy which took place in the House of Commons early this week. It is no doubt very difficult to hold the balance even between a generous provision for the multifarious needs of the war and extravagant expenditure, but the most indulgent critic is bound to see that spending has risen to an enormous extent in Government Departments. It would be folly not to remember that all this piling up of the National Debt means the imposition of burdens which will press heavily upon this generation and probably upon two or three generations to come. The preaching of economy, so long as it is combined with absolute efficiency, cannot be too vigorous or too frequent at the present time. Mr. Bonar Law agreed in substance with this contention, but he objected that it was of little use to appoint a Committee, since that would only lead to vague general criticism. What he suggested was the appointment of a first-class business man to do the buying in every department. That certainly would be a check upon extravagant outlay in one direction. But the expense must be at least equally great in another way; that is, in the payment of such an extraordinary horde of officials as has been called into existence by the war.

READERS will require no signpost to direct their attention to the very remarkable photographs taken by aeroplane at the fighting fronts, which we have the pleasure to show this week. They are official photographs, and are on exhibition at the Victoria and Albert Museum, but are now published for the first time. They bring home to the lay reader as nothing else has done the character of the work performed by aircraft at the front. At least, they will give some indication of it. It would be indiscreet in the highest degree to show too much of what the aeroplanes are doing. The photographs reproduced, in fact, are chosen not for any knowledge they impart, but for the light they throw on the means by which aircraft can be serviceable to the Army.

THAT LUMP OF CLAY CALLED ESSEX

IN a future number I shall have something to say about the organisation of agriculture in those parts of Essex where the farms have been kept in good condition. That excellent work is being done by the Executive Committee for the county will be readily understood from the mere fact that the Executive Officer is Mr. Hunter Pringle. But there is a task waiting to be done in Essex of very great urgency. At the same time, it is probably the most difficult agricultural problem in England at the present moment. In one word, it is the reclamation of those splendid wheatlands that were allowed to lapse into the poorest of poor pasture a quarter of a century ago. The story was told in 1893-94 by Mr. Hunter Pringle in his report to the Agricultural Commission of that date. There is not a more striking document in the library of the Board of Agriculture, and its contents are fresh in the memory even after this lapse of time. Essex clay was difficult and expensive to work, and when wheat after 1879 began to drop steadily in price until it was sold at a sovereign and even less per quarter, depression spread like a thick fog over Essex. It altogether broke such of the farmers as did not escape in time. It ruined many of the landowners and impoverished all of them. They were obliged to take any sort of tenants they could get and let them have the land at rents that seem fabulously low now. In many cases the return from the land was not sufficient to pay the tithe and other dues on it. Farmers came from all sorts of districts—from Scotland, from Devon and Somerset, from Wilts, and took the land to make what they could of it. The only method by which they could avoid losing money was to leave the land alone. Couch grass, docks, weeds of all sorts, spread over the land, and from that day to this it has never been brought into full cultivation again. What is needed at the moment is a gigantic effort at reclaiming the land this summer. The majority of agriculturists agree that there is only one effective method of doing this; that is by obtaining many sets of steam tackle—enough to plough at least 60,000 acres this year. The work ought to be taken in hand early in June. The reason why steam is preferred is because the two engines being stationed at opposite sides of the field and dragging the plough backwards and forwards by means of a cable, there is no weight on the land itself. Once ploughing could no doubt be done by a tractor, but the ground would have to be turned over and over again, thoroughly stirred and broken up by the cultivator, and so exposed to the hot summer sun that the weeds would be eradicated.

It would require immense power to do the deep ploughing, as the clay in such weather as we are having is nearly as hard as brick and would at first be turned over in huge lumps, each as large as a man. Obviously, many sets of machinery would be needed, and each would have to have its proper crew of skilled men. Three is the ordinary number required. But the difficulties connected with carrying out this large scheme are enormous. There are very few steam ploughs to be hired, as nearly every county in Great Britain will have to undertake a job of the same kind, though not on so enormous a scale. Nor is it necessary to dwell on the obstacles to getting them from the manufacturers. The latter cannot at the same time turn out their quantum of munitions and military equipment and manufacture steam tackle. Besides, every firm that is permitted to make agricultural machinery at the present moment is full with orders, so that if they accept more they require a very long time to execute them. Further than that, the question of finding adequate capital is formidable. The landowners, who have been drawing very little from their estates for the last twenty-five years, are not in a position to find money at the present moment. The class of tenant at present in these holdings is still less fitted to do so. It means a very considerable expenditure, beginning in June and going on till the harvest and threshing wages are paid in 1918. Probably the capitalist, whoever he is, would have to reckon on paying out his money for eighteen months at least. The work is of such national importance that in ordinary circumstances it would have been reasonable to ask for an advance from the Government through the Board of Agriculture; but in these days the Chancellor of the Exchequer is bound to keep a very firm hand on the strings of the national purse. But it has never been the way in this country to shrink from an important piece of work simply because it cannot be done easily. During the war many fortunes have been made, and probably if someone with good organising capacity were to set about it, it might be possible to raise the capital required, particularly

if it could be shown, as we think it could, that the bringing into cereal cultivation of this neglected and wretched pasture would not only be patriotism of the highest order and usefulness, but also a sound business proposition. The outlay would certainly be met at no distant date and the land permanently enhanced in value. Under the powers conferred upon it, the Agricultural Committee for the county could arrange to take over or alter the tenancy of the land for a reasonable period in cases where the owner or occupier was unable or unwilling to take the venture on himself.

Further, those who have had experience of tractors and know how vastly they have been improved and how much they are still capable of improvement will not accept without demur the opinion that the work could only be done by steam tackle. Our readers will remember an account published in these pages of the reclamation of Bedfordshire clay made by Mr. Saunderson with the aid of one of his own small tractors and with no other assistance whatever. He made up his mind he would prove that a tractor could do the whole work of a farm, and did not, during the first twelve months at any rate, keep a horse on it at all. There is no soil in Essex that could have been worse than that Bedfordshire clay, which was overgrown with hawthorn bushes and other weeds equally gigantic. Local farmers declared that the work never could be done by a tractor, and also that Mr. Saunderson was ruining the land by ploughing it too deeply. But he went on ploughing and cross-ploughing in a season that was not particularly favourable. He harrowed and cultivated, and even used cutters on the clods with the couch grass still growing on them, till in the end he got the soil clean and with a good tilth on it. Now if the summer were to be even moderately dry; if it has, as every summer has, hot, dry intervals, it is possible that the tractor would be found adequate to the occasion. Continental agriculturists, who have got in front of us in regard to the use of machinery in husbandry, hold that the steam plough is, for practical purposes, obsolete. There is nothing it can do better than a motor plough or a tractor. I am very well aware that there is still a prejudice against it on the part of many farmers. One does not hold converse with all sorts and conditions of cultivators without learning this. There is no more conservative class in the world than the farmers, yet every one of them who has given the tractor a fair trial, if he is asked, will say that never again will he be without one on the farm. As against the horse the tractor does not consume anything when it is not working; and when one job is not available it can take on another, so that the capital invested in it is always earning money, while a horse is always costing something to keep. Even when it is at grass it is consuming food that might be turned into milk or meat. As against the steam plough the tractor has the great advantage of being much less costly. A steam plough and its fittings cost altogether about £3,000; a serviceable tractor can be had for about £200. (One company is preparing to turn out a machine that will cost only a fraction of this amount.) It also can be worked with fewer men.

It may interest readers to know that, having written so far, I thought it would be interesting to ask Mr. S. F. Edge, the Controller of Machinery, his opinion upon the matter. Unhesitatingly he replied that the tractor would do the work quite as well as the steam plough. As a matter of fact, he is breaking up some clay on his own account this summer, and is going to do so with a tractor plough. In other words, he fully endorses the argument set forth above. Further, Mr. S. F. Edge, whose genius for business is well known, suggests that there is a very simple way of raising capital for improvements of this kind. If a man owns an estate and cannot afford to buy a tractor plough and meet the expense of reclaiming land that has gone derelict, let him sell a portion and cultivate what is left. Even if he had to part with two-thirds of it, and had one-third thoroughly cultivated and bearing first-class crops, he would be better off than before. But, of course, if a tractor would do the job, there is no question of his needing to sell any great quantity of land. A good tractor can be purchased, as we have said, for a couple of hundred pounds or so, and the expense of running it is trivial. Mr. Saunderson kept the exact figures, and his year's outlay for fuel and oil was only £100 1s. 7d. The repairs cost practically nothing. Mr. Hill of Tewan was the first Hertfordshire farmer to acquire a tractor, and he paid nothing at all last year for repairs and declares that he would not farm without one now. Thus the financial difficulty is not by any means insuperable.

But I hope no reader will, amid these considerations, forget the great cause for satisfaction in the fact that after these many years, during which the wheat-growing county of Essex has been neglected, it is in the way of being recovered from the waste. For the work is in good hands. As everybody knows, Mr. Hunter Pringle has proved his love of the county by the devotion of a lifetime to its interests, and there are many others who will put their best foot foremost in order to give the county a great push back into its original and commanding position. Mr. R. B. Turner of Barnston Hall, Dunmow, whose name carries much weight in regard

to machinery, is taking a great interest in this gigantic reclamation. He is fully alive to the advantages of the motor in ploughing, but he doubts if a tractor plough would be able to draw a deep furrow in clay hardened as it is by the extraordinarily dry weather which has followed our winter tribulations. Therefore he inclines to advise the use of steam tackle for the first ploughing; afterwards the work of breaking up the clods and general cultivation may be done with the tractor. We hope that this peaceful triumph will be meetly celebrated because the restitution of Essex is bound to be a notable landmark in the history of British agriculture. P.

THE HECATOMB OF THE TREES

Plum trees and cherry trees
 Pear trees of Picardy—
 Nesting birds and questing bees
 Found no fairer haunt than these
 Orchards bright in Picardy.

Slain and sad, they lie forlorn,
 Round the fields of Picardy,
 Where the foeman's hate and scorn
 Swung the axe that left them shorn,
 Ruined pride of Picardy !

Fallen trees, be comforted !
 Where you lie in Picardy,
 Low lies many a darling head
 Many a hero found his bed,
 Even as yours in Picardy.

O the sacrifice they made
 In the fields of Picardy,
 Heavy was the price they paid
 Uncomplaining, undismayed,
 They surrendered life's delight,
 Windy morn and starry night,
 Yea, and subtler holier things
 Precious past the pride of kings—
 Never more the tree shall bloom,
 Nor the man rise from the tomb
 Where he sleeps in Picardy.

God hath planted many trees
 Fairer far than Picardy—
 In a way Love shall reveal,
 They shall comfort, they shall heal—
 All the nations mourn and bleed—
 They shall help our bitter need—
 Well for us they bud and blow
 And the dear lads laid so low
 In the fields of Picardy,
 With the trees of Picardy !

A. S. FALCONER.

AEROPLANE PHOTOGRAPHS FROM THE FIGHTING FRONTS

THE camera is a witness; each picture which it produces is not simply a statement of a fact, but of a fact unilluminated by past or future statements, isolated in eternity. The camera is the faultlessly unprejudiced historian. It has no memory, no prepossessions; it is not "out" to prove any theory. As in the aerial reconnaissance work which is practised at the front, the camera is the ideal intelligence observer, because it possesses no intelligence, so in recording certain of the war's events it is the ideal historical illustrator because it has no knowledge of history.

These reflections are called forth by a visit to the Allied War Photographs Exhibition at the Victoria and Albert Museum. It is a good exhibition. It is also a wise exhibition. The authorities have done the country a service in getting it together, and we are glad to hear that, after its

sojourn in the West End, it is to migrate East to the White-chapel Art Gallery, and afterwards to tour the provinces. We hope that no one will be alarmed by the large number of prints on the walls and will assume that a detailed inspection of them would be fatiguing. The two British rooms, at all events, will be found to be full of rewards for the diligent searcher. The present writer thinks the British group of photographs the best, not only in technique, but in the grim and reassuring energy of their subject matter. Each section, however, has its own traits. In the Russian photographs the peasant-like characteristics of the troops are noticeable. They have an engagingly unmartial air when contrasted with the modernity and briskness with which all our own soldier-folk seem to be imbued. In the Italian saloon, again, we detect a very natural tendency to emphasise the terrific landscape settings in which the battle drama is played rather



A LIFTING BARRAGE—THE GERMAN TRENCHES LOOK LIKE TRACERY ON THE SNOW.

Crown copyright reserved.

Note the lines made by the first and second barrages, and the smoke of the shell-bursts in the third.

than the actors themselves. Mountain ranges which we knew when Tyrol tours occupied our summer thoughts are here outspread for us with a fresh and terrible meaning. Those peaks and snowfields are no longer a playground for the dilettante climber; they are the barrier across which two nations are swaying in mortal combat; trenches and guns and fortifications and wireless signalling stations now make pigmy defilements on the flanks of the eternal hills. Here again is another old friend of the vacations—St. Mark's at Venice, a handsome enlargement hung in a place of honour.

Why should St. Mark's rank as a war document? We look closer and discover that the mosaics above the cathedral's doors are invisible. They have been built over with anti-aircraft protections. Yes, decidedly, a record of St. Mark's in such a guise has a right to a page in the volumes which will tell the tale of Europe's days of anguish.

The strange little shock of interest which the picture of St. Mark's clad in its anti-aircraft screens gave to one who had often loitered in the Piazza occurs again and again when we are at pains to scrutinise the photographs for their minor



FLYING LOW ALONG A RIVER COURSE.

Crown copyright reserved.

Note men and guns on bridge under which the aeroplane had passed—the pilot is seen, the observer took the photograph.



MILITARY AEROPLANE MANŒUVRES.

Crown copyright reserved.

A fighting plane photographed by its assailant.

detail and see how often—almost casually, as it were—they disclose some item of unpublished (or already half-forgotten) history. To explain what is meant we shall allude only to one print, typical of this, in the British section. It depicts a street in Colombo; its date is July, 1916. Exotic figures throng the street. They are Russian soldiers. Now how many visitors to the exhibition knew, before they examined that photograph, that a body of Russians had occasion to touch at the island of Ceylon in July, 1916, or, if they did know, recollected this small but not unremarkable sidelight on the less widely chronicled manœuvres of the world-wide war?

The majority of the photographs are, as is right and proper, fiercely plain registrations, but, even so, not a few of them display a grim beauty. Many of the naval scenes in the second British room have an impressiveness which no painting could vie with: "H.M.S. *Invincible* Steaming into Action at the Falkland Isles" is really thrilling. So are "A Tank in Action" and "A Smoke Attack." Another photograph from our French front, "Sky Lit Up by Star Shells and Gun Flashes," which is a silhouette of soldiers seen against a

heaven of sinister coruscations, is a piece of impressionism that genuinely approaches the realm of art. Not that we would have too much art in such a show. We ask for facts: the photographer can leave us to supply our own emotional commentary. Nevertheless, it is a relief to turn, say, from the photographs of interiors of munition works and overwhelming arrays of shells, to the delicious cloudscapes which some of our aerial reconnaissance men have secured, presumably when on practice expeditions. These filmy and fairylike tracts of sunlit atmospheric ocean, whose rifts reveal the Lilliputian landscape far beneath, are scenes which the aeroplane collaborating with the camera have shown to the eye of man for the first time. Adjacent to them we find military-aerial photography in more serious mood. For if the camera has justified itself in war as a historian, how much

more so as a spy! The reconnaissance work done by means of photography from aeroplanes over the German lines will, when its full account is written, astonish the world. How it comes about that minutely accurate photographs can be taken at a height of 6,000ft., often through veils of rain or haze, from a machine which is travelling at more than express train



A COUNTRY HOUSE AND GROUNDS.

Crown copyright reserved.

As seen from an altitude of 7,000ft.—a picture full of instructive "reading."



AN AEROPLANE PHOTOGRAPHED AMONG CLOUDS.

The landscape below is also shown.

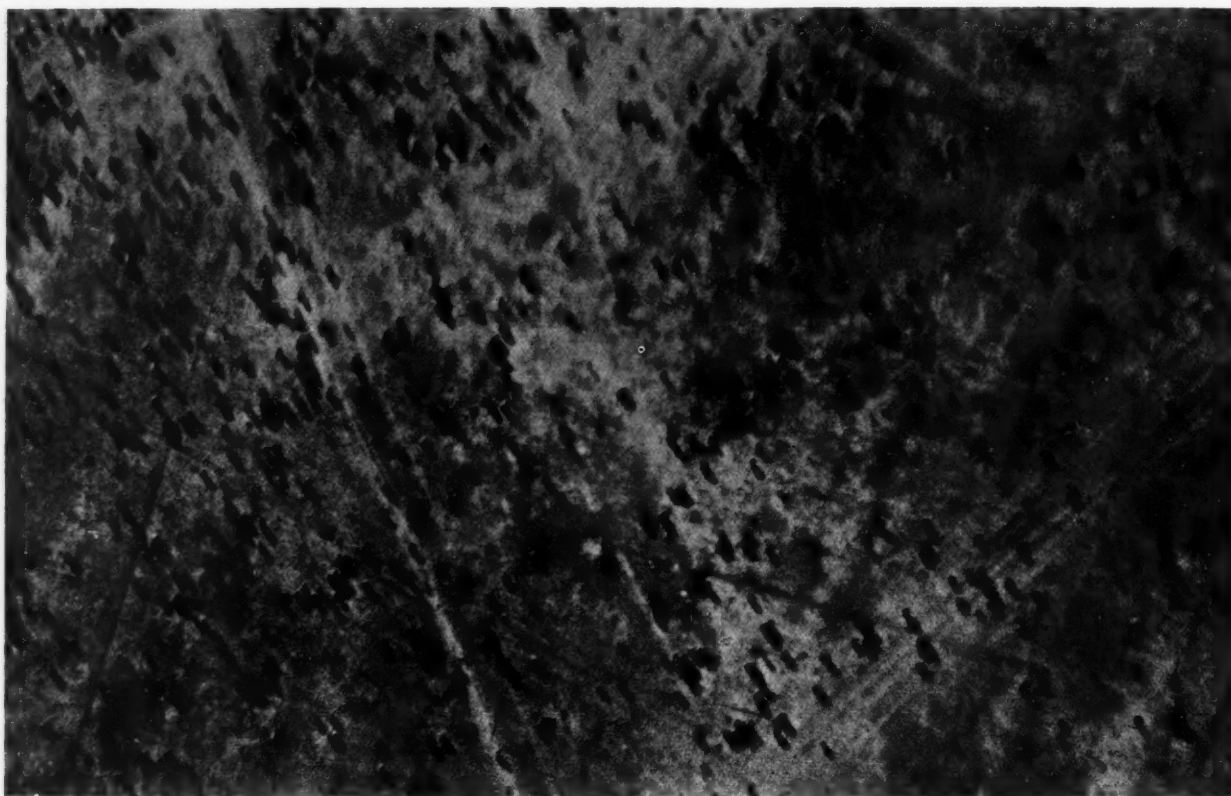
Crown copyright reserved.



AN EASTERN AERODROME.

The little black spots are onlookers going away.

Crown copyright reserved.



WHAT HUMAN BEINGS LOOK LIKE TO THE AIRMAN.

Crown copyright reserved.

speed, and dodging "Archies" the while, seems to the average well informed amateur inexplicable. Yet it is done. Sir Douglas Haig told us in one of his despatches that 1,700 of these photographs were recently taken in a single day. It is a staggering feat of scientific skill and individual daring. Here at the Museum we see

one or two examples of the kind of thing thus produced. "Zollern Redoubt, 18-3-16: The Same, 26-9-16" is a case in point, a couple of witnesses which offer evidence at once inspiring and horrible. In the first the Germans' positions are mapped out for us with delicate, pin-sharp precision. They look impregnable and permanent. In the second we



ANOTHER WONDER BROUGHT TO THE PYRAMIDS.

Crown copyright reserved.

see all that remains of this same patient construction: nothing but a mottled desert of shell holes, the proud Zollern Redoubt a mere blur in the tragic wilderness.

The Zollern Redoubt frame is one of a series which constitutes perhaps the most fascinating revelation in the entire show. We wish that more could be written about these wonderful photographs taken by the Royal Flying Corps, of the apparatus used, and of the extraordinary surmounting of the technical problems which they represent. It ought to be generally known that this novel form of reconnaissance, which has been created entirely since the war, is now being practised continually and systematically on all our fronts: that every plan of every advance is dependent on positive information brought back from the sky not by human observers, but by the camera—information which can be examined and debated at leisure. Our airmen's photographs, when "read" by the experts (for in this again a new knowledge had to be worked out), reveal not only every scrap of the enemy's positions, his barbed wire, his communications, his gun emplacements, his ammunition dumps, his railways, his hangars, stores, etc., and from day to day show us his forces' movements, but uncannily differentiate between occupied and unoccupied trenches, between real and false fortifications, between *camouflage* of all kinds and the thing it is by way of imitating. Lives have been lost in the securing of these photographs, but not a tithe of the vast host of lives which these photographs have saved. The pair of Zollern Redoubt pictures (and others near by) are a testimony. With the aid of these unimpeachable reconnaissance photographs the enemy's most cherished positions, his most carefully "hidden" batteries can be shelled with mathematical accuracy. Similarly, distances can be calculated to a nicety from the photographs when the time-table of an attack is being drawn up. Space prevents us from pursuing further a topic of enthralling interest: we can but draw the reader's attention to an exhibit which he would be ill advised to miss at the Allied War Photographs Exhibition. The cloudscapes give a foretaste of what loveliness aerial photography may garner for us when peace comes. The reconnaissance prints prove how the same camera which can capture those celestial fantasies is, in its matter-of-fact way, which still is so romantic, helping us to win the war.

WARD MUIR.

THE ACADEMY EXHIBITION

BY G. JEAN-AUBRY.

IT is not to be expected that I can give in these pages a detailed analysis of the many works exhibited, but rather some idea of the exhibition as a whole as it appears to a French critic. It is because I have followed the development of the art of painting in circles far removed from those of London that I find myself to-day offered this opportunity of giving my impressions, it should not, therefore, be matter for much astonishment if I seem to show a taste which differs strangely from that of the English public.

Taken as a whole the most noticeable feature is the great ability shown by many of the exhibitors, for the most part an ability without any real aim—that is to say, any aim unconscious of itself because of its inherent loftiness—and on the other hand, a liberalism in regard to certain new tendencies in pictorial art which is not to be met with in the more conservative French salons. There we have, as is the case everywhere in England, this mingling of traditionalism and the impulse towards reform; but it is all the more striking here when one is accustomed, as we are in France, to see the work of the Academician and that of the Modern kept somewhat rigidly apart. However, none of the canvases here which show an element of novelty in their method exhibit any real individuality, and those works which do rise above mediocrity all follow æsthetic tradition.

In spite of the tenderness which I have for my own country and the affection which I feel for England, I am not deeply stirred by a painting in which a little boy is depicted waving in one hand the French flag and in the other the English, in a room strewn with leaden soldiers, under the soft and dreamy glance of his young mother, while in the background the ghost of his father clad in khaki salutes this puerile version of the *entente cordiale*.

The man whose work stands out most incontestably from that of all others here is Mr. Orpen. By the variety, the technical excellence of his work, his knowledge of psychology he is at once distinguished from all the rest. I do not think

that his portrait of Mr. Winston Churchill is the best of his exhibits, the anxiety to show too many familiar traits in the features of a public man has made the picture unsatisfying and seems to have shackled the painter's hand, but the portraits of Viscount Bryce, of Colonel Elington, of Lieutenant-General Sir John Cowans are all strong conceptions well deserving of admiration.

The fact that Mr. Lavery's pictures hang near gives an added weight to Mr. Orpen's work. In France Mr. Lavery's work is well known; he exhibits frequently at our salons, but now he often seems to show in his pictures, beside fine attainments, a weakness and negligence of which one finds an example in his portrait of Mrs. Morrison-Bell.

After Mr. Lavery I must mention Mr. Glyn Philpot, whose two canvases denote a nature singularly self-poised and a painter extraordinarily sure in his craft. I am told that Mr. Philpot is young, and I fear for him; his very sureness in a young artist is somehow disquieting. I like the honesty and freshness of his portrait of the Marquess of Salisbury, painted with no hesitation, no niggling carefulness and no desire to astonish the beholder; it is true to the beautiful traditions of the greatest painters.

It is always with interest that one views the works of Mr. Shannon, who follows with a dignity of his own the pictorial ideas of Watts. I must, however, reproach him in that this time he has given us in his portrait of Mr. Ricketts, together with his model's look of eager intelligence, something undoubtedly a little sad. What this work loses in charm, however, it gains in depth, and that is a quality rare enough in the exhibition.

I am surprised to find so few talented landscape painters among the exhibitors; I find none remarkable save Mr. Bertram Priestman, who leaves the beaten track with "The Sun-veiled Hills of Wharfedale" and "The Hill-bound Village."

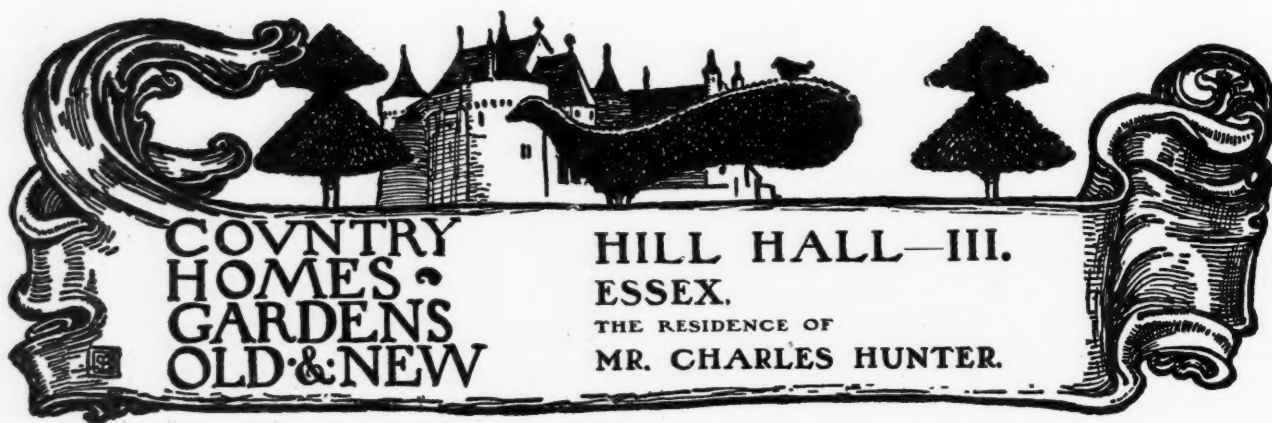
Among the portraits I find the most interesting work; the two exhibits of Mr. George Henry of a woman in a black satin robe boldly painted, with a face expressive and full of life, and a pretty little canvas representing a young girl with the bright sunrays shining through the trees upon her auburn hair have a freedom and freshness pleasant to find here. For a similar reason I must mention the portrait of Miss Muriel Hirst, by Richard Jack; "Hester," by Miss M. C. Fawkes, a canvas in which shows, without archness, a charming timidity; a pleasing fantasy in grey by T. Binney Gibbs; a very amusing little sporting sketch by A. J. Munnings; and, in an entirely different manner, the cold and exact impression of the Rue de Bourg, Chartres, by D. Y. Cameron.

I would also like to mention a work which seems almost out of its element—"The Holy Family," by Mr. Edward Stott; not that a religious subject necessarily seems incompatible with a modern environment, but that this work reveals a delicacy of touch of which I would like to have found more numerous examples. I know well how difficult it is to treat such a subject without imitating either the great masters or the commercial art of the painters of "religious subjects." Therefore all the more can I admire the fresh charm of Mr. Stott's exhibit. It reminds me of some of the best and most simple works of our greatest French Catholic painter, M. Maurice Denis, with an added charm as of youth, which one finds only in England.

The standard of the sculpture seems even lower than that of the canvases. The only works which seem to me of interest are those of Mr. Hartwell, Mr. Allan G. Wyon, the bust of Miss Evelyn Barlow-Box, by Mr. de Kerckhove, and, above all, "The Critic," by Mr. C. Webb Gilbert, which has all the qualities of true sculpture. Victor Rousseau, the Belgian sculptor, of whose works I have often seen pleasing examples, shows only two busts of a characterless type which has no real sculptural value.

At the same time I know well that there are in England certain sculptors of talent and promise whose work we must hope to see elsewhere.

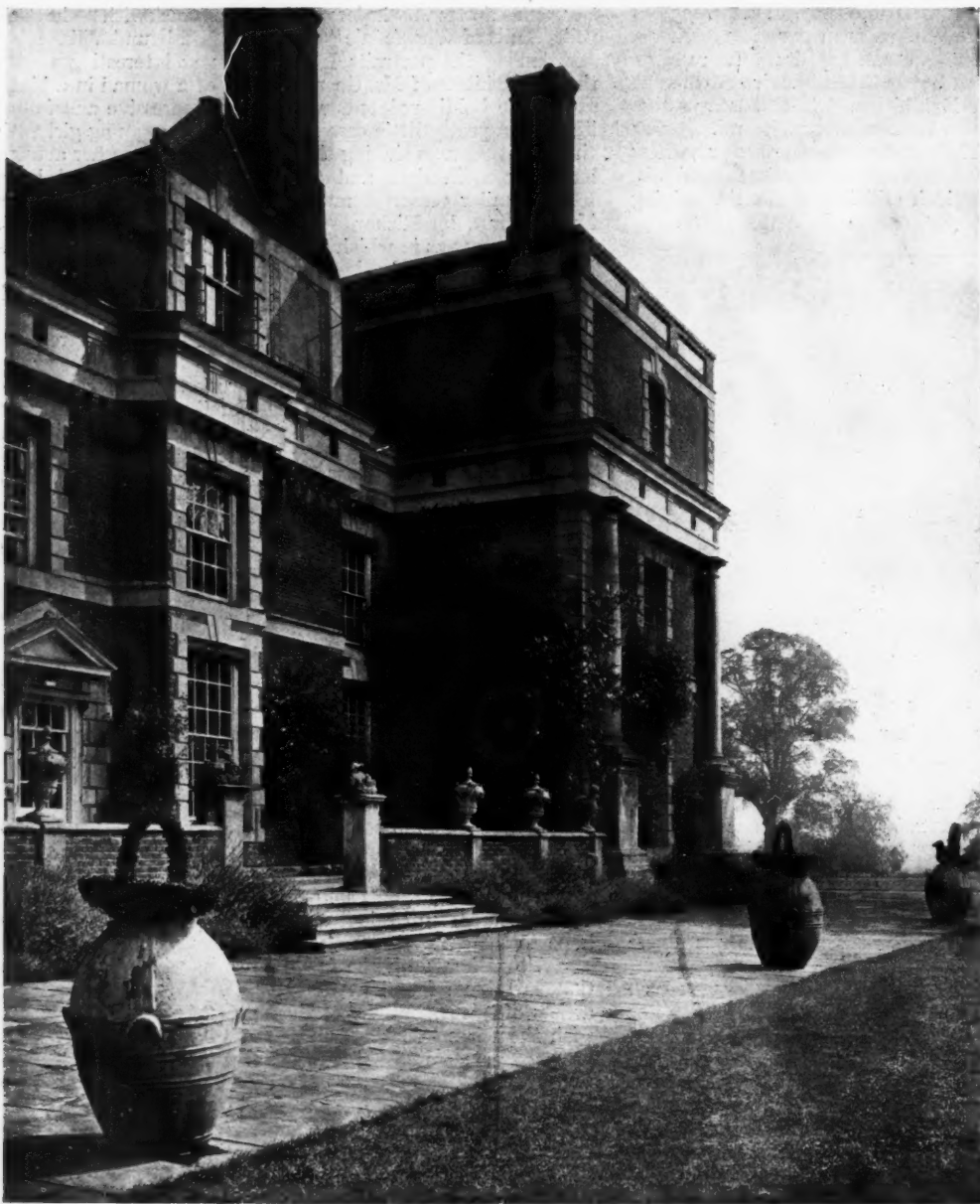
Altogether, with the few exceptions which I have mentioned, I have found at the Royal Academy the works of artists of talent, but few of them go any further. One could wish them less talent and more reality and life. Here is the work of painters so skilful that they are able to depict the texture of velvet, the wood of a chair or the knob of an electric bell, so that one might mistake the representation for the real thing, but from whose work that humanity, which is the thing most needful, is missing. Why do these artists care so greatly for the technique of their art and so little for its spirit? Why do they not call to mind the Evangelist's story of Martha and Mary to follow a little more the way of Mary and a little less that of her sister?



THE old Secretary of State's spelling of his name was changed by the first baronet, who is called Sir Thomas Smyth on his monument in the church. But even that change did not satisfy the seventh baronet who, discovering, perhaps, in some document dating from days of etymological inexactitude, the ludicrous spelling Smijth adopted it triumphantly and saddled his descendants with it. That seems to have been the chief event in the family history since the advent of the Hanoverian dynasty, except that in 1839 the tenth baronet added a maternal ancestor's name to his patronymic and became Sir Edward Bowyer Smijth. More recently, Hill Hall ceased to be the residence of the

family, and it was taken on a long lease five years ago by Mr. Charles Hunter, who placed the work of reparation and extension under the supervision of Mr. Reginald Blomfield. On the exterior little was done to the main building, except the addition and alteration of some windows—the adding of dormers to light the attics, the replacement of thick sash bars where a later and thinner type had been introduced. But the office wing that stretched out westward was entirely reconstituted and much enlarged, so that the kitchen and its dependencies might be removed thither from the west side of the quadrangle, where a charming pair of grass terraces on two levels now form the foreground of the wide view of

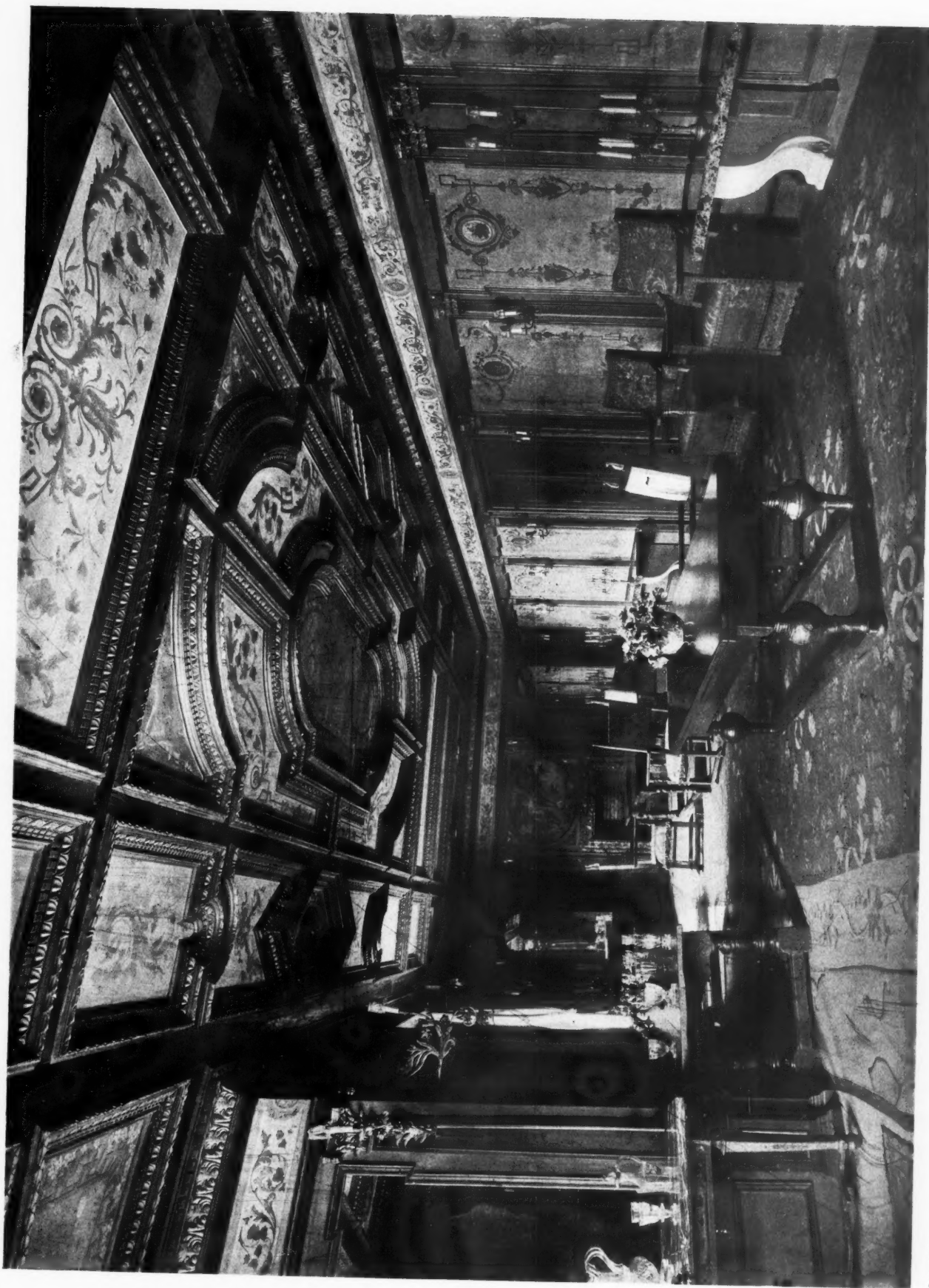
which Ep, ing Church tower is a prominent point in the distance. Not only was extra sitting-room accommodation gained by the addition, but a broad corridor gallery now stretches its length along the west as well as the entrance side of the quadrangle, giving easy and independent access to all rooms, both upstairs and down. The original plan made the north entrance merely an arched opening, wide enough for a horseman, if not for a vehicle, leading through to the quadrangle and thence to the hall door which opened behind screens at the west end. The hall will then have had a "great chamber" over it. But the "great improvements" of Strype's time entirely altered the aspect of the hall. It was carried up to second storey height and a gallery with round arches, supported on wood panelled columns, was thrown across its north side. At gallery height the Elizabethan windows remain, but, below, round arched sashes were introduced, and a round arched screen replaced that of Elizabethan date at the west end. Old Sir Thomas Smith's great pedimented



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1.—A VIEW OF THE SOUTH FRONT.

"COUNTRY LIFE."



2.—THE DINING-ROOM.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

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3.—IN MRS. HUNTER'S SITTING-ROOM.

"COUNTRY LIFE."



Copyright.

4.—IN A WEST BEDROOM.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

mantelpiece of plaster was left, but a new one of marble was inserted within it. This (Fig. 5) has now been removed to the corridor. It is a very handsome example with enriched consoles facing front and sides, and the entablature breaking over them. There are many like it in Early Georgian houses.

Very similar, for instance, is one at Wingerworth in Derbyshire, completed in 1729, where also the staircase is almost identical with that at Hill Hall (Fig. 6), which we may therefore put down at about the same date. It would seem that the second Sir Edward Smith, who lived till 1744, did not hurry the completion of the alterations which his father initiated. Not only his mantelpiece has been removed, but the west screen has been taken away and the arched gallery replaced by one of marble columns, as seen in one of last week's illustrations. Mr. John Sargent's well known portraits of Mrs. Hunter and of her daughters hang on the south wall of the hall.

Its furniture is mainly English and of varying dates, beginning with the fine bulbous-legged oak table, which was obtained in York, down to the chairs covered in *petit point* between the windows. Venice, however, became the happy hunting ground of Mrs. Charles Hunter in her search for furniture and fittings. English furniture of the age of Anne might have been preferable in an English house with so many characteristics of that age. But to fill the great spaces of Hill Hall with genuine pieces of that now much sought after and valuable type would have been a formidable undertaking, and though in the eighteenth century Italy had abandoned its Renaissance refinement for a somewhat coarse gorgeousness, there is much good among the bad, and the former can be discovered and obtained by those who have taste and knowledge.

Mrs. Hunter has selected wisely and well, so that Hill Hall is now interesting and apt in both furnishing and



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5.—MANTELPiece NOW IN THE CORRIDOR.

"COUNTRY LIFE."



Copyright.

6.—THE GREAT STAIRCASE.

"COUNTRY LIFE."



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7.—CUPBOARD PROBABLY TAKEN FROM A SACRISTY.

"C.L."



Copyright

8.—VENETIAN CUPBOARD IN THE NORTH BEDROOM.

"C.L."

decoration. Under the latter head comes the present dining-room, located in that west side which had been for the most part offices. The whole linings, walls and ceiling, had been taken out of a Venetian house and were found at a dealer's. The ceiling is, anelled out by a telling scheme of heavy and enriched beams and is somewhat older and better in design and proportion than the walls. But the whole is harmonious and picturesque—a very successful transposition from one country to another.

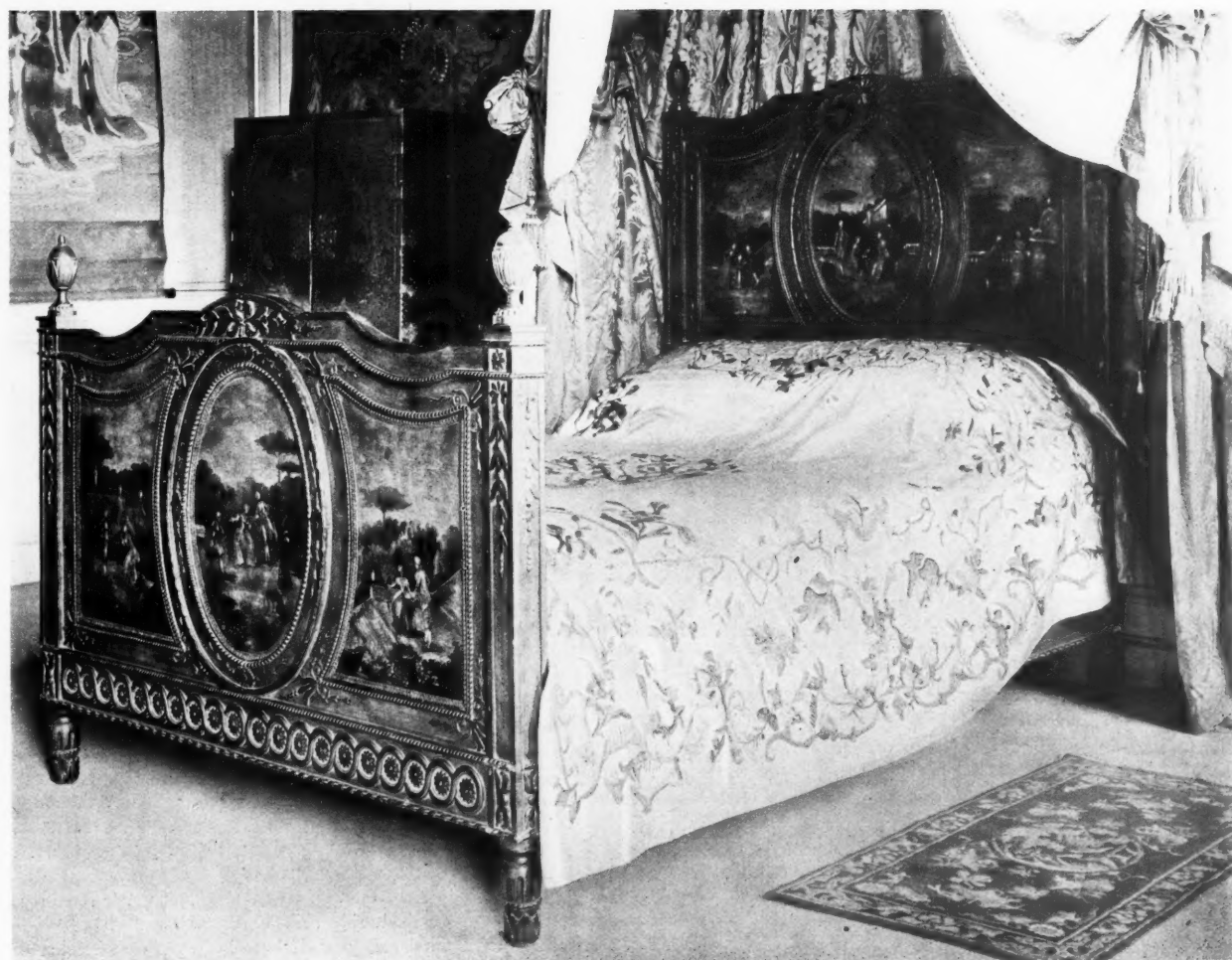
Showing much commendable reserve in both form and decoration are several big cupboards, probably originally intended to hold vestments in sacristies. The one in the north bedroom (Fig. 8) is of the period when with us Chippendale was pre-eminent, whereas the Venetian bed in Mrs. Hunter's bedroom (Fig. 11) dates from the years when Louis XVI ruled in France and Sheraton had begun to design in England. He ended in full Empire period, and Italy also had its interpretation of that style, as we see by the bed in one of the west bedrooms (Fig. 4). The wallpaper there should be noticed. It is English, made for the 1851 Exhibition, a descendant of Walter Scott's novels and the Eglinton Tournament. The designing may be theatrical, the drawing defective and the colouring crude, but it possesses some distinction, and a distinct interest as a bold product of the Early Victorian Age. It is good to have rescued this remaining unusual example from oblivion and set it where it should long survive and tell its history. But it cannot, of course, compete in value and excellence with the numerous examples of Chinese papers to be found at Hill Hall. Some of these have been collected and introduced by Mr. and Mrs. Hunter, but the one in her sitting-room (Fig. 3) belongs to the house and is, therefore, the most interesting. It should be compared with the one at Copp'd Hall near by, which also represents the pleasures of the Chinese while others of this type represent their occupations.



9.—PAINTED BED CANOPY IN BLUE ROOM.



10.—FROM VENICE.



Copyright.

11.—IN MRS. HUNTER'S BEDROOM.

"COUNTRY LIFE"



GROUND FLOOR PLAN.



13.—AT HILL HALL.

combined with what is best in the taste and habits of to-day.

H. AVRAY TIPPING.

WILDFOWL AT SALONIKA

THERE are times when even war has its compensations. It was at one of such times that I managed to get away from all things appertaining to soldiering, with a 12-bore on my shoulder instead of a service rifle, that I had a glimpse of duck and geese in countless numbers and varieties. It was a lovely summer afternoon, hot and still, though early in February, and the marshes with their reed beds lay still and unruffled by the slightest breeze. Small patches of mist hung about, the sky clear blue overhead, and in the distance Mount Olympus, the home of the gods, raised his snow-covered heights clear and sharply defined. From the marsh arose a subdued hum of sound, the voices of its thousands of inhabitants, a lazy murmur of content.

The heat of the marsh was intense as I ploughed knee-deep through the black slime and rotting vegetation. After laboriously forging ahead for three or four hundred yards I came to the side of a small lake about half a mile in length, the whole of which I found was no deeper than from two to four feet. Upon this water was a flock of about a hundred avocets and a few hundred mallards. I tried for some time unsuccessfully to shoot one of the former, wishing to have a specimen to

skin, but found them very wary and shy—as wild, in fact, as our native curlew.

Leaving them masters of the situation I forsook the lake and its bordering beds of high rushes, and made for some swampy ground which looked a likely place for snipe—and so it was. Snipe were there in thousands, making it almost impossible to shoot any. They got up in tens and twenties instead of ones and twos. The air after I had walked a few yards was full of snipe; they all flew very high and many of them were drumming. I managed to get nine, however, and my friend found me there (we had taken different directions to explore more carefully) with a fine bittern. He had seen a large flock of geese; so leaving the snipe ground we started a long and tiring walk, or rather wade, to the place where my friend had seen them. On the way we got one mallard and lost a shoveller duck, and we passed a large herd of buffalo cows with their calves. Some of the older buffaloes have wonderfully large horns.

The marsh was now opening out before us into a flat plain about a foot under water, ideal feeding ground for geese and ducks. We soon espied the geese in the distance, a huge flock. I think I should be considerably underestimating their numbers if I said there were any less than two thousand. They were opened out in a huge line, and advancing in our direction as they fed. We again agreed to separate and thereby possibly drive them over either one or the other of us. When we got nearer they soon took alarm and arose with much honking and flapping of wings. We found out later that they were by no means the unsophisticated geese we had hoped they might be, but knew more about shooting than most geese, especially my range shots, as they had been fired at more than once by a Lewis machine gun from aeroplanes.

When they got up I flung myself into a handy ditch and awaited developments. There was very little cover and therefore I dared not look up, but could hear they were coming in my direction. They were soon over me, but too high to make a shot worth while. They were all going for some safe spot, and as I was just going to get up I spotted three wheel and come down with the obvious intention of landing near me, as they were coming down in a spiral. Soon they were directly over me and just the right height. I sprang up, missed clean with my right barrel and killed with my left—a rotten shot, as it was an easy right and left, but I consoled myself with "One's better than none." The one I had got turned out to be a fine old gander (a white-fronted goose) in splendid plumage, with breast nearly pure black. I had hardly finished examining him when, hearing the swish of wings and looking up hurriedly, I saw, flying past a little to my left, six or seven birds which I took to be geese. Again I fired two shots, and again one bird fell, which, to my astonishment, I found was a ruddy sheldrake in wonderful feather, rich, glossy chestnut and an exceptionally large bird, being, in fact, almost as large as the goose. Later on I got another mallard and a pintail duck; the latter fell some distance from me. Her fall was also marked by a hawk, a marsh harrier (of which there are a great number on the marsh), which saw the chance of an early meal; but that hawk never made a greater mistake, as he now figures among my collection of skins.

No more birds came and my friend had to leave owing to a faulty gun, but I decided to stay on and see the flight out. After eating some bully beef and sandwiches and having a drink from a flask, I felt refreshed and ready for hundreds of ducks if they would only come my way. I spent the remaining time before the flight walking about trying to find a spot which looked like a lively place and where I could get some shelter to fire from. I eventually found a place which was only 2in. or 3in. under water, where the grass growing under the water had been eaten down to the very roots and the mud covered with both duck and geese footprints, also a handy ditch ran through in which I could hide. Getting myself comfortably settled at about 5.45 p.m. I had not long to wait. First came some snipe like bullets, and though a lot flew past me and it was quite light, I only succeeded in getting two, as their pace was terrific and they flew very close to the ground. After the snipe came duck of all kinds—mallard, pintail, teal, shoveller, shelduck, ruddy (one only) and many wigeon. To an indifferent shot like myself the pair of mallards, even or odd birds, at flight time are as a rule quite hard enough to shoot; but when the birds are coming over on each side and landing all round one, it is confusing, and I tried many wild shots in hopes of getting two or three at a shot instead of sticking to legitimate rights and lefts. To make matters worse, I had very few cartridges left, and they were some No. 3's I had brought for geese.

However, to cut a long story short, I got at flight the two snipe already mentioned, four mallards, three teal, one pintail drake and a ruddy shelduck. The last bird I shot nearly cost me all the others. I shot him—a mallard—with my last cartridge, and wishing to make certain of getting him, for it was getting very dark, I ran in the direction where I thought he fell. After a long hunt I eventually found him all right, but when I tried to find my way back I was completely at a loss to know where I had left my game bag (a haversack) with my day's spoil

tightly packed in it. There was no moon, it was very dark and my matches were very wet. It took me nearly twenty minutes to find it, and I started off home very pleased with my day's work.

I had an awful walk back, falling into ditches and holes, and got thoroughly soaked in mud and water, but had come to the conclusion that, though cartridges cost 5d. each in Salonika, they are cheap, dirt cheap, for the sport and pleasure one can get with them.

J. C. L.

LITERATURE

SOME BOOKS OF THE WEEK

"THINKINGS."

"I AM all aching inside of me with my thinkings," says the prodigy of Lucas Malet's novel, *Damaris* (Hutchinson), aged five years. Over and over again the clever but unbalanced novelist forces the intellectual babe to repeat this confession, fearful, perhaps, that the good-natured reader might pass "thinkings" as a misprint for unripe fruit, too much cake, or some of the other small debaucheries which account for aches inside at five. The intellectual puckering of her baby forehead often recurred to the mind as I turned over the pages of two books in succession, the authors of which have been making copy out of their aching insides. One is *Interiora Rerum* or *The Inside of Things*, by "Quivis" (The Bodley Head), and the other an excursion into theology which Mr. H. G. Wells has just published, *God the Invisible King* (Cassell). So fine a title ought of itself to attract many readers, but I think they will be disappointed for reasons easy to explain. Just now all of us without exception are included among those "in any way afflicted or distressed." Personally, or through our kith and kin, we are forced to the very edge of mortal things, and if, like that little one, our insides ache with thinkings, the disturbance will not be allayed by reading an embittered indictment of the Nicene Creed, even though Mr. Wells may deem it essential to bring up his foot, horse and artillery for this purpose before attempting to establish his brand-new religion. It may possibly be held clever by the vulgar to describe "the Lord and Giver of Life" in the Nicene Creed as "that stuffed scarecrow of divinity," but the language of the assailant is, at any rate, a sad contrast with that of the assailed.

But chiefly the appeal of Mr. Wells is that of one who states "the claims of modern religion"—a phrase curiously reminiscent of Lord Devonport's praise of modern margarine, of the merits of which the public are as ignorant as they are of the new religion. On a subject of such grave import it may appear flippant to say such things, and yet how else to get home our meaning? The real objection to this book is not that the author attacks this or the other creed, but that he writes of religion as one who does not understand the sentiment of devotion. When he tries to enumerate the qualities of a religious man, he merely strings together certain qualifications that are associated with a good bank clerk or a permanent official:

The believer owes all his being and every moment of his life to God to keep mind and body as clean, fine, wholesome, active and completely at God's service as he can. There is no scope for indulgence or dissipation in such a consecrated life. It is a matter between the individual and his conscience or his doctor and his social understanding what exactly he may do or not do, what he may eat or drink or so forth, upon any occasion. Nothing can exonerate him from doing his utmost to determine and perform the right act. Nothing can excuse his failure to do so.

Polonius "and these few precepts in thy memory keep" was spiritual by comparison—it is best characterised by the two negations at the end. What Mr. Wells confessedly attempts is to translate the language of science into terms of theology, but he knows the language of science well and that of religion imperfectly. Hence the halting version.

Suppose that Mr. Wells of the twenty-first century were to turn his wit upon the Mr. Wells of this one, could he not spit him as effectually as the authors of the Nicene Creed are spitted? For what nonsense does our author emit when he comes to the work of building up. "God is courage," he asserts, and courage is an abstraction. "God is a person," he says, on the same page, and proceeds in a rather long-winded manner to widen the meaning of the word "person." But widen it as he may, person is concrete, courage is abstract, and the two cannot be one and the same. So, at any rate, we can fancy H. G. Wells of the twenty-first century criticising

H. G. Wells of the twentieth. Just as the true believers are most accurately described as bank clerks, so the God of their fashioning is only a superior bank manager. Mr. Wells is very much inclined to treat "the Lord and Giver of Life" as one of the *dramatis personae* in a novel. But it would be an idle thing to argue on the various propositions advanced. Our main criticism is that while this book must inevitably tax the patience of readers, it supplies to them nothing of that comfort and peace which they all desire so much. One of the great ends of religion is to make the individual superior to the buffets of fate. With peace in his own mind, fortune can hold over him no threat which he does not despise. But those who seek that kind of strength and consolation in this book must return with hands as empty as they were at the beginning.

Let us for a moment then turn to the third book in our category, *Interiora Rerum*, by an anonymous writer. The author does not attempt to build up new faiths and new generations, but he goes over a great many of those inward problems which confront the individual alike in peace and war. His salvation has been found in poetry, and poetry and religion are at bottom one and the same thing. In Mr. Wells we seek in vain for passages which touch to the quick the varying hopes and passions, regrets and joys of men. His cleverness is purely intellectual. No man has written so much with so little of the poetry of life in it. Our anonymous author, on the other hand, dwells in an atmosphere of thought coloured by imagination. He has written with refinement and knowledge and sympathy upon many things of the spirit, and to those in search of such nourishment and consolation we warmly recommend his book.

The Cameroons, by Albert F. Calvert. (T. Werner Laurie, 6s. net.)

MR. ALBERT F. CALVERT is so well known as a traveller and author that it is scarcely necessary to introduce him to the readers of COUNTRY LIFE. His latest work may be described as a collection of interesting facts anent the physical features, natural resources, political history and general characteristics of the ex-German West African Colony, the Cameroons, which the Kaiser was wont to call "the brightest jewel" of his crown. By no means the least interesting and instructive part of this book is the preface, which gives a concise review of the subject, together with the decidedly humiliating—so far as Great Britain is concerned—story of the annexation of the Cameroons and Togoland by sheer German "bluff," engineered by Bismarck, prince of political strategists, just as the British Government contemplated sending a consul to Togoland in response to an earnest requisition from the natives to be taken under the protection of the British flag. The author, in the course of his preface, states that the data he required for the compilation of this work—written, it is to be presumed, before the conquest of the Cameroons by the Allied forces in January, 1916—was not available for his work in English form. Not even a belated British Consular Report was procurable. In his extremity, therefore, he had, perforce, to rely upon such German publications as were obtainable in this country, and from the official writings of Dr. Grotefeld, Dr. Preuss, Dr. Paul Rohrbach, Dr. Walter Buss, Herr Eltester and Herr Siegfried Passarge he gathered a vast mass of information concerning the geographical and geological features, forestry and vegetation, the natives and native cultivation, together with a summary of the progress made in the Cameroons under the German system of development, and the success of their experiments in plantation cultivation. A great deal of valuable matter was also found in a paper written by Captain W. A. Nugent, R.A., the British Commissioner appointed to survey and fix the boundary between Nigeria and the Cameroons in 1912. Mr. Calvert barely touches upon the wonderful "sporting possibilities," in the shape of big-game shooting, obtainable in a land which simply teems with elephants, hippopotamus, bush-cow (buffalo), leopards, antelope of many different species, and feathered game in great variety, from the great bustard to that sporting and delicious morsel the common or migratory quail. We venture to suggest that a chapter on this subject would have been devoured with avidity by not a few of Mr. Calvert's readers. The text, on the other hand, is fraught with much valuable information in regard to the native peoples, the climate, soil, agriculture, productions, minerals, industries and scope of development in this vast and rich West Coast territory. The publication is illustrated by no fewer than 192 excellent photographs of a scenic and industrial nature, and, incidentally, of "German origin." The diagrams (also German), showing Hausa territory, distribution of fauna and flora, ivory districts, profile of the

country, river basins, etc., are most useful. We cannot, however, say so much for Mr. Calvert's small-scale map of the late German Colony. It is, obviously, a greatly reduced copy of one of the many unreliable "Karte von Kamerun," which proved so misleading to the Anglo-French troops during the earlier stages of the Cameroon Campaign, and until more accurate maps were discovered. Mr. Calvert's map is misleading. As an example, the Edea-Eseka section of the railway is indicated thereon as being a permanent way right through to Widemenge, whereas Eseka (this important agricultural centre, by the way, is not shown on the map) forms the terminus. The remaining section of sixty miles or so, although surveyed and laid out, is still in the "projected" stage. Again, on the map in question, there is no sign of the important and excellent main road which exists between Edea and Jaunde, nor is there marked a single one of the several large European trading stations, plantations and native towns which are to be found along this 125 miles stretch of cleverly constructed highway. The much shorter and less important Jaunde-Widemenge Road is given, as is also that running between Jaunde and Kribi. Without unduly quibbling, we are bound to admit that his map of the Cameroons will not "pass muster" before anyone acquainted with the topography of the country.

The Silver Lining. by O. C. Platoon. (Newnes, 2s. 6d.)

THIS is a book which really gives us some conception of what soldiering means in these times. There are no complications in it; no queer coincidences. It is just the everyday story of a cheerful soul with a good sense of humour and the knack of manufacturing conversations, readable and true to nature. One almost forgets to realise how astounding this particular kind of everyday life would be to a civilised man thrown quite suddenly into it. We are told what the subaltern expects, and what he actually finds. The one we recognise as what we ourselves should expect, having, as we now have, a smattering of the theory of war; the other rings true and emphasises the difference between theory and practice. It shows us also something of the spirit of our young officers and of their men; something of the reason why the British Empire is itself, and will continue to be itself when this awful war is over. We put down the book with a fortified knowledge that, man for man, the German is not our equal in the field, and the conviction that one of our greatest assets is a rather crude but ever-present sense of humour, and another our confident expectation that things must assuredly be and go wrong before we can—grumbling, but perfectly certain of the outcome—settle down to put them to rights again.

Wayside Crosses. (The Chiswick Press).

MORE and more as the war goes on does the element of sacrifice become impressed on the national mind. There is still pride in the supreme achievements of courage and endurance, but the prevailing feeling is that the price of liberty is sacrifice. And because the cross is the essential emblem of sacrifice, we have little doubt that many will hear with interest that a Wayside Cross Society has been formed. Its aim is "to restore to our English countryside some of those Wayside Crosses and Calvaries which in foreign lands are such an appealing reminder to the wayfarer of the great fact of our Redemption." There is little doubt that when our soldiers return there will be many who will remember the strong impression made on their minds by the crosses of France and Flanders. They will be deeply concerned that their fallen comrades shall be remembered in every village in England, and it is well that a society should exist to give guidance to anyone who contemplates raising a Village Cross by way of thankful memorial. Particulars as to membership of the society, etc., may be had from the Rev. Prebendary Eck, Ardeley Vicarage, Stevenage, Herts. The pamphlet issued by the society describes the four main types into which the open air crosses of mediæval England may be divided—Standing Crosses, Spire-form Crosses, with niches for standing figures, Preaching Crosses and Market Crosses. Choice of materials is discussed in the pamphlet, and there are sections devoted to the Figure of Christ, inscriptions and lettering, enclosures, hill-top sites, cost, and the vexed question of repairs to old crosses. We wish the society all success in its labours.

The Book of the Sea-Trout: with some Chapters on Salmon, by Hamish Stuart. (Martin Secker, 6s.)

THE gifted author of this notable work unfortunately succumbed to consumption, while in the prime of life, on a sea voyage which it was hoped might effect a cure. His articles and MSS. on sea trout and fishing for them were afterwards co-ordinated, and collectively form a posthumous book which would undoubtedly have been revised and added to had Mr. Stuart survived. No more valuable work on the sea-trout has been penned, and apart from his scientific theorising in which the author does not see eye to eye with sundry contemporary authorities, the practical side, the angling for these much prized fish, is fascinating reading. Mr. Stuart takes us over the most prolific Scottish waters, emphasising the most magnificent fishing of the Hebrides, and especially eulogising Howmore and Lower Kildonan. The varying moods, habitat, and habits of sea-trout, matters of no small importance to rods-men, are treated with a knowledge only to be acquired by constant study and close observation under all conditions, and Mr. Stuart claims, perhaps justly, that the sea-trout surpasses all other salmonidæ as a sport-giving fish. While refraining from quotation, the author's vivid accounts of splendid catches, his desperate fights with heavy fish and ingenious methods of foiling their cunning would make any angler's mouth water. This work is a treasure-trove of useful hints all the more valuable as coming from a practical and successful sea-trout fisherman who made a life's study of his theme. Salmon and salmon problems also find place, and are ably discussed, while page after page sparkles with breezy fishing yarns which give life and colour to the work.

This is the End, by Stella Benson. (Macmillan, 5s.)

IF you happen to be the sort of person who likes a story to have a nice, neat plot and a happy ending, where electro-plated tea-knives serve to prove to a bride and bridegroom the satisfying properties of married love and the fact that this is indeed the best of all possible worlds, you will be better advised not to purchase Miss Stella Benson's new novel. If, on the other hand, the wistful and the whimsical, the aching hopefulness of youth and

the compromise which cuts it short are so much already open to your consciousness that from a mere hint you will be able to visualise what she means you to see, buy it by all means. We can imagine readers who will put it down in some annoyance with strictures upon its irresponsibility and the lightness of touch, almost fantastic, with which it is written; but there will be others who, having read with laughter, will turn the last page trying to believe that the smarting in their eyes is not due to tears. Jay, who tried to find reality by way of 'bus conducting and romance in a "Secret Story" and a "Secret Friend," will disgust or delight or even merely confuse you, according to your own nearness to such thoughts as hers. Her soldier brother, loud-voiced Kew, with his singing, his detached, humorous courage, his anxious care to seem commonplace, is not less delightful for being more commonplace. Mr. Russell and "Mr. Russell's Hound," to whom he told all his thoughts, and who was sometimes heard to reply in "a curious small voice proceeding also from Mr. Russell," and Cousin Anonyma, the novelist, are people whom you would not willingly forego the chance of meeting if you are the sort of person who likes this sort of book at all. Cousin Anonyma's encounter with the spy is one of the funniest things in the story. Most of this book's humour, however, comes in some mere flash of description, such as that of the Pekingese dog which "never wears country clothes. It always looks as if it had its silk hat and spats on," and the rainy day when "there was no hole in the sky for hope to look through." If not a very cheerful book, it is a brave one and a humorous, and Miss Benson has incorporated in it some very tender and musical verses. It might, perhaps, have been a little kinder to her public had she provided her *dénouement* with a plain label so that the dullest of us might be quite sure whether she means us to weep or rejoice; but that, after all, is unimportant, for what matters is not what she says so much as how she says it.

BOTTLING FRUIT PULP WITHOUT SUGAR OR WATER

AT a recent meeting of the Royal Horticultural Society Mr. Vincent Banks, who is giving a most interesting and valuable series of demonstrations in fruit bottling, explained a very simple process for the preservation of fruit pulp. One of the great points in this process is that any odd bottles or jars can be used, and as there are scores of these lying idle in every country home and as vacuum jars are likely to be even more scarce and dearer, the advantage of this method is of immense value to the country at the present time. It should be explained that Mr. Banks is a leading expert in fruit bottling, and for years his exhibits at the meetings of the Royal Horticultural Society have reached the high-water mark of perfection. But, curiously enough, the method he explained was recently brought to his notice by a lady who chanced to read in the *Times* of one of his earlier demonstrations. Mr. Banks related how he arranged an interview with the lady in question, and her demonstration in what he termed the "sulphur process" so impressed him that he decided to try it for himself and, if successful, to spread the knowledge for the benefit of others. The method is not so good as bottling by means of the vacuum process, but it is a good alternative, and the lady who brought it to notice has used it with success for over twenty years. The process simply consists of sterilising the interior of the jars with sulphur fumes, filling the jars with fruit pulp—rhubarb pulp was used for the purpose of this demonstration—finally tying down with parchment paper. The sulphur fumes are introduced by means of burning a sulphur taper or ribbon, and then inverting the jar containing the fumes until it is ready to be filled with pulp. Difficulty may now be experienced in purchasing sulphur tapers, as they are of foreign make, but powdered sulphur burnt in the jar in a deflagrating spoon will answer equally well, or the jars may be inverted over a little sulphur burnt in a saucer. The idea is as old as the hills—so old that it appears to have been forgotten. Generations ago the womenfolk used to sterilise jam-jars by burning a sulphur match inside them just before introducing the jam or pulp. The idea is splendid, and pulp made fairly stiff by boiling may be poured into the jars, tied down and stored away for future use, and no sugar is required to preserve it. The simplicity of pulping is for beginners a great point in its favour. The temperatures do not require watching nearly so closely as those of fruits which are bottled in water. The fruits or rhubarb stalks (not leaves, which are unquestionably poisonous) are merely brought to simmering point and kept at that from half an hour to three-quarters of an hour. An open fire or any ordinary range can be used for this, and the regulation of the heat is not so particular as in the case of bottling fruit in water. When bottling fruit in water, the rather under-ripe fruit is best, as it is less liable to crack open; but for pulping, now that there is such a shortage of sugar, fruit should be selected which is as ripe and sweet as possible, and if the worst comes to the worst it can be eaten without sugar, though we are doubtful if anyone will venture on unsweetened rhubarb. However, it may be stored until sugar is available; and this is a great consideration.

It will be found on experiment that the sulphur fumes discolour the pulp where they first come in contact with it—that is to say, around the sides and on the top—but the discoloration gradually fades away. Fruit preserved by this process is perfectly sound and wholesome, and in these serious times any method of preserving food without sugar is worthy of very careful consideration.

THE GAEKWARS OF BARODA IN MEDALLIC ART



Pilaṅk Rao Gaekwar (1721-1732). Fatehsing Rao Gaekwar (1778-1789). Anand Rao Gaekwar (1801-1820). Fatehsing Rao Regent (1807-1819).

THE Exhibition of Medallion Art now being held in Oxford Street at Messrs. Waring and Gillow's will be of interest alike to the artist, the naval or military man, and to the general public. Besides models submitted in competition for prizes offered in connection with the Exhibition, the collection includes modern German medals lent by Sir Arthur Evans, two of which in particular,

presentation—the British Museum, the Bodleian Library of Oxford and the Fitzwilliam Museum of Cambridge being so far the sole recipients. A set has been lent to the Exhibition of Medallion Art which has been arranged with infinite care in the Georgian Hall.

The existence of the series illustrates once more the quick perception of the Maharaja Gaekwar in the direction



Sayaji Rao Gaekwar (1820-1848). Ganpat Rao Gaekwar (1848-1857). Khanderao Gaekwar (1857-1871). Malhar Rao Gaekwar (1871-1875).

"Sir Edward Grey and the awakening of Egypt, 1915," and "President Wilson's neutrality and the supply of munitions to the Allies, 1915," satirical and reminding one of the illustrations in *Simplicissimus*, offer a curious sidelight upon German hate. Among the fine examples graciously lent by Their Majesties is the gold naval medal, of which four only were struck to commemorate victories over the Dutch in 1653. The work of modern artists of many nationalities, Japanese, French and Italian medals, and British medals, both naval and military, are represented, the collection of English historical medals being particularly fine.

One of the most interesting and, artistically considered, most important series of portrait medals produced, not for commercial but for purely historical purposes, during the present generation, is the group of nine medal-plaquettes here for the first time illustrated (by permission) in their entirety. This series, quite recently completed, has been executed for H.H. Sir Sayaji Rao, G.C.S.I., Maharaja Gaekwar of Baroda. It will probably remain of the greatest rarity, to be sighed for in vain by collectors, as only a few sets have been assigned for

of art and education in Baroda, and is but one of the several schemes now going forward; the chief, perhaps, being the formation of a National or State Gallery of European Art not unworthily representing all the chief Schools of Painting,

past and present. This contribution to numismatic art is intended by His Highness to perpetuate in bronze for the instruction and edification of his own people the memory and the appearance of the Rulers who, during the past two hundred years, have made the history of Baroda State. It may be assumed, generally speaking, that the populace, in spite of compulsory free primary education—which Baroda was, in the East, the first to introduce—have not had sufficiently before them the full story of their country since the dynasty of the Gaekwars came to the throne; that is to say, since the year 1721, when from having served for generations as the Chief Ministers of the preceding House it succeeded to it in the interests of efficiency. These plaquettes are all based upon and adapted from the existing original and unique Rajput water-colour portraits; all, that is to say, except that of the present Prince, which was done from life on



H.H. Maharaja Sir Sayaji Rao Gaekwar, G.C.S.I.

the occasion of his last visit to England, just before the war broke out, by Mr. Frank Bowcher. It should be observed that the fourth of the series represents not a Gaekwar, but a Regent. The drawings themselves are of great interest, illustrating not only the types of the Rulers, but also, in respect of the earlier examples, the curious insistence on character—pushed now and again almost to the verge of caricature or at least to what the French call the *portrait chargé*—but also the advance from extreme unaffected simplicity in costume and deportment to the magnificence of Court display, from archaism to that ultimate splendour, symbolising power and prosperity, demanded by the people in those who guide their destinies.

The intention of the Gaekwar is a felicitous one. It is that these plaquettes should be mainly used—taken separately—as awards to students in his university and collegiate institutions. It is for this reason that beneath the portrait of His Highness, which forms the “reverse” of every plaquette, appear in the vernacular and, alternatively, in English, the words “Awarded to — for merit.”

Thus, in course of time the whole series will become distributed among the people, and—specially prized as being a direct and personal gift from the honoured Ruler to the recipients among his subjects—will preserve one aspect of Baroda history in imperishable bronze. This, indeed, is one of the chief merits of the medal, even now too little understood and appreciated in this country—that in the convenient and permanent form provided by this beautiful art history may be recorded in metal, every piece equal in artistic quality and certain to be treasured by every Cabinet in the world's museums that succeeds in obtaining them.

A point of technical interest which may be mentioned is that while every British coin—even the heavy five-shilling piece—is struck at a single blow, each of these plaquettes, by reason of its thickness, due to the fact that the heads on the two faces coincide, has required not less than forty blows for the perfect rendering of the work in the dies. The Gaekwar's is an example that may well be followed here by those who wish to perpetuate and widely spread the memory of those who, loved and honoured, have fallen in the War.

M. H. S.

CORRESPONDENCE

AGRICULTURE AND COMMERCE.

[TO THE EDITOR OF “COUNTRY LIFE.”]

SIR,—The other day I attended an agricultural discussion—opened by the Editor of COUNTRY LIFE—at a large and well known club in the Metropolis at which an ex-Under Secretary of the late Government was present. The general drift of the discussion was that greater attention should be paid to the growing permanently of more food, so as to be less dependent on Overseas supplies.

The Under Secretary in question was called upon to say a few words. He is a very pronounced Free Trader. He urged (1) that it was unlikely that we could grow any further large proportion of food; and (2) that, even if we could, the question of the exchange would crop up, and this latter would then perhaps be to our disadvantage.

In answer to the first point, I would say that not being in any way directly connected with agriculture, his opinion may be entirely disregarded. We can grow an enormously greater amount of food in our Isles, and I venture to suggest we must do it.

As to the second point—and it is a stock argument among a few “intellectuals”—it is equally fallacious. I ventured to intervene in the discussion. My point was that so far from the exchange being depreciated in our country by ourselves growing a larger part of the food we require, it would be quite the other way about; and, discussing the matter afterwards with a friend, who in his business controls the best part of two millions of capital, he thoroughly agreed with me. I prefer the opinion of the hard-headed business man to that of the doctrinaire.

I have never yet come across any man, including the Under Secretary alluded to, who could explain satisfactorily to me or to an audience why or how the interests of our country would be detrimentally affected if, say, we grew £200,000,000 worth more of food in our country instead of importing it from abroad. To the extent to which we grow more things, to that extent have we less need to pay money abroad, and, therefore, the exchange must necessarily be strengthened in our favour instead of weakened. We should have more home-made wealth to exchange. It has been urged that the shipping interest would be affected by growing instead of importing food, and that trades depending on the shipping interest would be also affected. My answer is (1) that the health and safety of the nation must always come first, and (2) that if there are £200,000,000 sterling more at the disposal of our agriculturists, that money will get into circulation for the benefit of the workers and trading community. If, for example, our farmers receive £200,000,000 sterling for extra food grown, the money will not remain in their stockings. It will be (1) in part reinvested in the land—through the medium of seeds, manures, implements, labour and so on—to the advantage everywhere of village and urban communities, and (2) the balance will go into the banks. That balance does not, of course, remain in the banks' cellars, but is necessarily used or lent by the bankers to the trading community in the urban centres; and the trading community (i.e., the manufacturers of all kinds) are thereby enabled to employ a vast amount more labour in the manufacture of all the various articles required not only by the farmers, but by the general community both here and abroad. All this money and new trade would be to the benefit of our nation and people; and, as the people by this new wealth must necessarily become better off, their health improved and their safety greater, their requirements also become greater, which fact again reacts to the benefit of all. In the general advantage thus accruing from the wealth wrung from our own soil the shipping interest, railway interest

and every other interest benefits; and we may take it that so far from the Under Secretary's argument as to the exchange being detrimentally affected, the result on balance would be the exact contrary. I have never yet been able to get any banker or any non-party politician to show this argument to be incorrect, and I am surprised, after all that is happening on land and sea, there should still be people about who can remain oblivious to obvious facts.—J. L. GREEN.

BANNING THE PERCHERON: CURIOUS ACTION BY IRISH AUTHORITIES.

[TO THE EDITOR OF “COUNTRY LIFE.”]

SIR,—The Percheron, the French horse which has made so strong and favourable an impression on British artillery, transport and veterinary officers, has been denied admission into Ireland. Following the example of Lord Lonsdale and Mr. H. Overman, who have introduced the breed into England, a gentleman purchased a horse in order to make breeding experiments in Ireland. The Governments of France and England consented to the transit, but the Irish authorities refused to admit it, because, they said, of the uncertain position in France as regards horse disease. M. Gerald Powell, Nogent-le-Rotrou, from whom the horse was obtained, has in the past been a large buyer of Irish hunters for the Continent. In this connection it may be recalled that in 1909 the Irish Department of Agriculture wished to introduce the Anglo-Norman, but had to abandon their intention because of the strong opposition in Turf and hunting circles, where it was held that the importation of this breed would prove detrimental to the Irish hunter. The Anglo-Norman has been evolved from the English hackney, but whereas the latter has been bred for the show ring and the park, the French Government have encouraged the breeding of a faster, stronger animal, and claim to have produced a horse combining such speed, stamina and strength as to make it the best in the world for light artillery. In pre-war days the Anglo-Norman enjoyed an immense reputation as a carriage and general purpose horse, and was exported from France all over the Continent. It is not improbable that the opposition of the Irish hunter breeders to the introduction of the Anglo-Norman would have been repeated in the case of the Percheron. Of the half million horses purchased by the British Army in America the majority are Percherons or their crosses. The French horse owed its introduction to America to Rosa Bonheur's masterpiece, “The Horse Fair.” When the engravings of that famous picture (now hanging in the British National Gallery) crossed the Atlantic, people asked where such superb horses could be obtained. Then the Percheron boom set in. Hundreds and hundreds of horses were shipped, until Northern France was almost drained of her best animals, and millions of dollars found their way into the pockets of her breeders. The Percheron conquered America, and to-day is much the most popular and most numerous horse in it.—G. G. CARTER.

OLIVER CROMWELL AND CHEQUERS COURT.

[TO THE EDITOR OF “COUNTRY LIFE.”]

SIR,—In your issue of May 5th it is stated (page 440) as a reason for Oliver Cromwell never having been at Chequers Court that he “had been dead a hundred years before a marriage brought it to the descendant who owned the relics.” May I point out that his daughter, Frances, married my direct ancestor, Sir Thomas Russell, the owner of Chequers Court; and, furthermore, that there is every reason why her father should have known the place, as John Hampden lived close by at Hampden House, where his body was buried. “Tradition” has never made Chequers Court “the home” of Oliver Cromwell, but as his daughter was the mistress there, it was not unnatural to presume that even if her father did not stay there, she, at any rate, was the means by which so many Cromwellian relics came to the place, such as his watch, his baptismal robe (which I myself wore at my baptism), his prayer book (from which the fly leaf was stolen in my lifetime) bearing his autograph, his sword, a leather surcoat, etc., as well as the plaster mask taken, as it is believed, during life; and contemporary portraits of his family, including his mother, his daughters and two sons, and also of Cornet Joyce,

General Ireton, etc. Chequers Court was my home, of which my mother, Mrs. Frankland-Russell-Astley, was heiress.—HUBERT D. ASTLEY, Brinsford Court, Hereford.

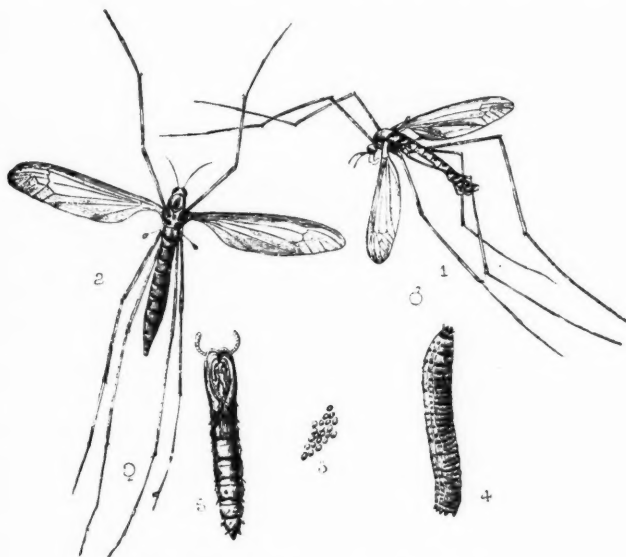
[Mr. Astley is right in saying that Frances Cromwell married Sir Thomas Russell, Bart. But they did not own Chequers Court. It was not till after Colonel Rivett was killed at Malplaquet in 1709 that his widow, the Chequers heiress, married their younger son, Governor John Russell, and that was the first connection of the Cromwell blood with Chequers. But neither John Russell nor his son, Charles, will have owned the relics, for they were cadets of the Russell family, and only when the senior branch ended in 1757 did the then owner of Chequers (grandson to the Governor) inherit the Russell baronetcy. There is no record of Cromwell ever having been at Hampden House, or any reason to suppose that in an age of difficult communications Cromwells and Hampdens visited each other.—ED.]

LEATHER-JACKETS IN THE LETTUCE-BED.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I beg to forward for your inspection specimens of a grub which is doing much mischief among young vegetables here, notably lettuce. I should be very much obliged if you would name the grub for me and advise as to its extermination.—H. L. BROOKSBANK.

[The grubs sent are those of the leather-jacket, which are particularly destructive this year among young lettuce and cabbage plants. This pest is also frequently found gnawing the stems of carnations and violas just at the soil level. Unfortunately, it carries on its nefarious work at night, and thus often evades detection. The leather-jacket is the larva of the daddy-long-legs, or crane fly, although the fat, legless grubs of tawny colour and with an abrupt truncated tail bears no resemblance to its well known parent. The grubs work their way through the soil to the surface at night,



DADDY-LONG-LEGS OR CRANE-FLY.

1, Male Daddy-long-legs, 2, Female Daddy-long-legs, 3, Eggs, 4, Grub, 5, Chrysalides.

and this is the best time to capture them. They may however, be caught in daylight by removing the soil around the plants with a pointed stick. The leather-jacket, like all other soil pests, resents being disturbed, and the best way to keep them away is to stir the soil frequently between the plants and to turn the ground over by digging prior to planting and as often as it is practicable.—ED.]

FRIENDLY COCK ROBINS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—The following incident, witnessed by me on May 9th, is, I think, a very unusual one. In my garden I saw two cock robins, one on the ground, the other in a tree; the latter flew down to the former. Knowing the pugnacious nature of cock robins, I expected to see them fight, but to my surprise the bird on the ground fluttered his wings, as young birds do on being fed, and the other cock fed him. This incident was twice repeated during the few minutes I watched them.—S. LLOYD.

A RAPID RECOVERY.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—On May 4th I gathered some long sprays of wild cherry in blossom and leaf, about 4 p.m. in very hot sunshine. It soon became very limp and dead looking. When I returned home about 9.30 p.m. it was put in a bucketful of cold water. About two minutes afterwards it had quite revived and was as fresh and beautiful as when it was growing. I was very much struck by the sudden recovery of the leaves and blossoms—quicker than in any fleshy-stemmed plants that I have ever seen.—GERTRUDE A. FRYER.

HOME-MADE JAMS, ETC.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I have just heard from my home in Hampshire as follows: "By dint of doing without sugar we were saving a nice little store for jam making, but now an order has come out making it a punishable offence to have more than a fortnight's supply of sugar in the house." Even at this distance

where I am still a reader of your paper, we take a keen interest in affairs at home. It appears a very short-sighted policy on the part of the Food Controller, this restriction, as thousands of pounds of fruit will necessarily rot where it grows for want of the sugar for preserving. What is the "professional" jam maker doing in this case?—CAPTAIN, British Army, Salonika.

[Our correspondent may like to know that it was a misunderstanding about the sugar. Lord Devonport and Captain Bathurst have both explained that there is no objection to hoarding sugar for the purpose of preserving fruit, provided that it is done by economy and not by purchasing in unfair quantities.—ED.]



THE HEN AND HER WILD DUCK BROOD.

A wild duck's nest, consisting of fourteen eggs, was taken and hatched by a white Orpington hen, all the eggs proving fertile. The photograph shows these little ones enjoying a bath in their water pan.—S. A. BROWN.

A "TRAMP'S" LODGING HOUSE OF BYGONE DAYS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Wandering through Stretton Dale, the wayfarer comes, at a turn of the road, upon a small hamlet, in the midst of which is set what, at first sight, seems to be an old black and white yeoman's house, crowded out, as it were, by more modern life. Its purpose is, however, indicated by its name—"The Traveller's (i.e., Tramp's) Lodging House," which assigns to it a status lower than that of the ordinary inn. Until three or four years ago it had, from Jacobean, and perhaps even earlier, days, sheltered many a one journeying along this much-trodden highway, replacing, it may be, a still more ancient building. The entrance to the house opens directly into a fairly large room, low ceiled, and with a wide open fireplace. This was the principal room, and it must have been a motley company that by day and by night gathered round the blazing logs. No food was provided in the house, but any traveller who had the good fortune to have some in his wallet was allowed to warm it by the fire. On the wall hung the following rules, which, in their restrictions, sufficiently indicate the type of person who took shelter here:

"No drink allowed on the premises
No Bad Language To Be Used
No Drums To Be Used Here
No Washing on Sat. or Sun.
No Smoking Upstairs
Boots To Be Taken off before
Going To Bed
Couples To Wash Their Own Pots.
By Order."

Upstairs there were a few rooms, but the largest had no internal communication with the rest of the house, and was reached by an outside stone stairway. Why this was so arranged does not seem to be known. Perhaps it was to accommodate the tramp of lowest degree, or perhaps the night tramp, who



HERE TRAVELLERS HAD LEAVE TO LIE.

could thus find refuge without disturbing his fellows. There was no fireplace or suggestion of comfort in the room; it was a mere shelter from rain and storm. The house seems only to have closed its doors when the standard of living in the parochial workhouse was raised and, in exchange for a minimum of labour, good fare and more comfortable quarters were offered to these gentlemen of the road. The owner of the copyright of the photograph I enclose is Mr. E. S. Cobbold.—ALICE KEMP-WELCH.

PRIMITIVE THRESHING.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR—In Andalusia, that region of primitive survivals, the corn is universally "trodden out" by animals, usually mares. In this photograph the farm is a prosperous one, and twelve mares, four abreast, are trotting round their monotonous circle, while the farmer, in the centre of the ring, turns with them, and keeps them going by whirling at them a long lariat. I have frequently seen as many as twenty mares thus employed; while, on the other hand, it is by comparison somewhat pathetic to see the less wealthy peasant threshing out the produce of his little field by means of the humble ass, which often has her long-legged offspring gaily skipping alongside.—H. S. VAUGHAN.



THE PROPOSED DOG TAX.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—According to the papers the Government are proposing to tax dogs at an earlier age than six months, the matter receiving consideration in connection with the Budget. The question is being discussed by dog owners, and some seem to think the idea is a splendid one, likely to cause a great reduction in the number of mongrels now in the country, as if such an Act were passed the puppies reared by the poorer class of people would probably have to be killed, whereas under the present six months' taxation they have a good chance of selling before tax is due. I think it would be a hardship on dog and puppy lovers who cannot afford to buy the best breeds. The majority of dog keepers, I should say, care for their animals not so much for the purity of breed as for their playful and lovable natures. In my opinion it is not the poor breed of dogs that makes the food question serious, but the pure breed, brought up, as a rule, for show purposes; for the simple reason that in the first case the dogs as a general thing obtain a good part of their living from the accumulated food waste of the people—waste that, if not eaten by the dogs, would be thrown away—whereas the pure bred dogs are fed



THE POOR MAN'S FRIEND.

from the same foodstuffs that their owners consume; so that instead of being an economy, I think it would act in a different way and increase rather than reduce the consumption of food necessities. I beg to enclose a photograph of an ordinary field spaniel and puppies of a mixed breed, belonging to a working man who took a great pride in his dogs and always managed to sell the puppies before the time to pay the tax on them; that is, before they were six months old.—W. SUGDEN.

THE FOOD OF PARROTS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Although it often happens that individual parrots of robust constitution will live and even thrive on a régime like that recommended by your correspondent, I would sound a note of warning to parrot lovers against sop, tea and coffee, which are apt to induce feather-plucking. It would be



A STRANGELY ASSORTED PAIR.

TREADING OUT THE CORN.

interesting to know whether there is any real truth in the belief that parsley is poisonous to parrots. Humane considerations naturally deter one from experimenting, but I know of at least one case where a parrot ate parsley without injury, and as a general rule I have found these birds as indifferent to vegetable poisons as they are sensitive to mineral ones.—E. K. BENSON.

"SUBLIME TOBACCO!"

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—As tobacco is going up in price, perhaps the following verses in praise of "The Pipe" may be of interest. They are inscribed in faded brown ink in a very old-fashioned hand upon the flyleaf of a "Life of Charles the Second," by William Harris, D.D., date MDCCLXVI. I can vouch for the writing being *antique*, as the book (written by a bygone family connection) has been in our library over a hundred years or more, and the handwriting is dissimilar to any in old letters, etc.

THE PIPE.

Charmer of a lonesome Hour,
pipe Enchanting Furnace Bright,
Thou a clogged Brain Cast Scour
and the Heavy heart make Light.

But tobacco Lovely plant
When I see the lost in Eir,
Swift as lightning Shoot aslant
I behold lifes pickture there.

I like the a vital spark
Fed by ashes cal to mind,
that one day it must be Dark,
Nought but ashes left behind.

Blushing I survey the Chase
While the smoke we both persue,
I as eager in my Race
and as nimble ful as you.

The spelling and capitals as in the original—*picture* had been spelt right and then crossed out!—ALICE HUGHES.

BADGERS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—While walking across the fields on Sunday, May 6th, my attention was attracted by the barking of the dog which had been accompanying me. A few seconds later I saw running across the field, about a hundred yards away, a large badger. The dog was running by the side of it barking all the time. The badger appeared to take no notice of it, and kept on at a leisurely pace until it came to a bank across the field. It turned down this and was later lost to view; the dog, a big Welsh terrier, returned just afterwards. It was a sunny afternoon, the time, 3.30 p.m. A few days previously I had seen a pink badger, which had been caught and kept in captivity. Its fur appeared to have been dyed pink all over on top of its ordinary colour. It was kept in an improvised kennel and fastened to it by a chain, and a dog collar round its body. During the day it would remain at the far end of the kennel, but at night it would come out and burrow all round it. I should be much obliged if any of your readers could tell me if it is quite a common sight to see a badger running across a field in broad daylight; and also if a pink badger is very rare.—CHESHIRE.

COMRADES.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—The enclosed photograph was taken in Pernambuco, Brazil, some years ago. The dog and parrot are great friends, although Scottie is responsible for his little playmate's rather scanty tail.—BARBARA A. McMASTER.